

THE
WORKS
OF THE
EVER MEMORABLE
MR. JOHN HALES
OF
EATON.

NOW FIRST COLLECTED TOGETHER
IN THREE VOLUMES.

The wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy, and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. JAMES iii. 17, 18.

VOL. II.

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S C R I P T U R E.

2 Pet. iii. 16.

*Which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do the
other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

THE love and favour which it pleased God to bear our fathers before the law, so far prevailed with him, as that without any books and writings, by familiar and friendly conversing with them, and communicating himself unto them, he made them receive and understand his laws: their inward conceits and intellectuals being after a wonderful manner, as it were, ‘figured and charactered*,’ (as St. Basil expresses it) by his Spirit, so that they could not but see, and consent unto, and confess the truth of them. Which way of manifesting his will, unto many other gracious pri-

* Φαντασινόμενοι τῷ ἡγεμονικῷ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὡς ἂν αἰνῶν βύληται τῆς ἰδίας φωνῆς ὁ Θεός. Basil. Homil. in Psalm. 28. §. 3.

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vileges which it had, above that which in after-ages came in place of it, had this added, that it brought with it unto the man, to whom it was made, a preservation against all doubt and hesitancy, a full assurance, both who the author was, and how far his intent and meaning reacht. We that are their off-spring, ought, as St. Chrysostom tells us, so to have demeaned ourselves, that it might have been with us as it was with them, that we might have had no need of writing, no other teacher but the Spirit, * no other books but our hearts, no other means to have been taught the things of God, ' except those internal and sweet ' lessons of divine inspiration, where truth speaks ' without words or writing, and where the more ' secret the information, the more delightful †; ' as saith Fulgentius. ' For it is a great argument ' of our shame and imperfection, (saith Isidorus ' Pelusiota) that the holy things are written in ' books ‡. ' For as God, in anger, tells the Jews, that he himself would not go before them as hitherto he had done, to conduct them into the promised land, but would leave his angel with them

* ——— ὅπως ὀφείλοντας ζῆν καθαροί, αἱ μὲν δὲ δῶσθαι γραμμάτων, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ βιβλίων παρέχειν τὰς καρδίας τῷ πνεύματι.
In Matth. Praefat. Hom. 1.

† Nisi inspirationis divinae internam suavioremque doctrinam, ubi sine sonis sermonum et sine elementis literarum, co-
dulcius quo secretius veritas loquitur. L. 3, Epist. 106.

‡ Ἐγκλημα γὰρ τῶν γραμμάτων δῶσθαι.

as his deputy, Exod. xxxiii. so hath he dealt with us, the unhappy posterity, degenerated from the antient purity of our fore-fathers. When himself refused to speak unto our hearts, because of the hardness of them, he then began to put his laws in writing. Which thing, for a long time, amongst his own people, seems not to have brought with it any sensible inconvenience. For amongst all those acts of the Jews, which God in his book hath registered for our instruction, there is not one concerning any pretended ambiguity or obscurity of the text and letter of their law, which might draw them into faction and schism; the devil, belike, having other sufficient advantages on which he wrought. But ever since the gospel was committed to writing, what age, what monument of the church's acts, is not full of debate and strife, concerning the force and meaning of those writings, which the Holy Ghost hath left us to be the law and rule of faith? St. Paul, one of the first pen-men of the Holy Ghost, who, in paradise, heard words which 'it was not lawful for man to utter,' 2 Cor. xii. 4. hath left us words in writing, which it is not safe for any man to be too busy to interpret. No sooner had he laid down his pen, almost ere the ink was dry, were there found, such as St. Ambrose spake of †, 'who thought there could be no greater disparagement unto them, than to seem to be igno-

† Syllabarum aucupes, qui nescire aliquid erubescunt, et per occasionem obscuritatis tendunt laqueos deceptionis.

‘rant of any thing, and under pretence of interpreting obscure places, laid gins to entrap the uncautelous:’ who, taking advantage of the obscurity of St. Paul’s text, made the letter of the gospel of life and peace, the most forcible instrument of mortal quarrel and contention. The growth of which, the Holy Ghost, by the ministry of St. Peter, hath endeavoured to cut up in the bud, and to strangle in the womb, in this short admonition, which but now hath sounded in your ears, ‘Which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.’ In which words, for our more orderly proceeding, we will consider, *First*, the sin itself that is here reprehended, *wresting of scripture*: where we will briefly consider what it is, and what causes and motioners it finds in our corrupt understandings. *Secondly*, the persons guilty of this offence, decyphered unto us in two epithets, *unlearned, unstable*. *Last* of all, the danger, in the last words, *unto their own damnation*.

And *first*, of the sin itself, together with some of the special causes of it. *They wrest*, *σρεβλῶσι*. They deal with scripture as chimics deal with natural bodies, torturing them to extract that out of them which God and nature never put in them. Scripture is a rule which will not fit itself to the obliquity of our conceits, but our perverse and crooked discourse, must fit itself to the straightness of that rule. A learned writer in the age of

our fathers †, commenting upon scripture, spake most truly, when he said, ' That his comments ' gave no light unto the text, the text gave light ' unto his comments.' Other expositions may give rules and directions for understanding their authors, but scripture gives rules to exposition itself, and interprets the interpreter. Wherefore ' when ' we contend not for the authority of scripture, ' but for the authority of our own interpretati- ' ons ‡,' as St. Austin speaks: when we strive to give into it, and not receive from it the sense: when we factiously contend to fasten our conceits upon God; and, like the harlot in the book of Kings, 1 Kings iii. 20. take our dead and putrified fancies, and lay them in the bosom of scripture, as of a mother; then are we guilty of this great sin of wresting of scripture. The nature of which will the better appear, if we consider a little, some of those motioners which drive us upon it.

One very potent and strong mean, is the exceeding affection and love unto our own opinions and conceits. For grown we are unto extremities on both hands: we cannot with patience, either admit of other men's opinions, or endure that our own should be withstood. As it was in the Lacedemonian army, almost all were captains §; so, in these disputes, all will be leaders: and we take our-

† Faber. ‡ Non pro sententia divinarum scripturarum, sed pro nostra ita dimicantes ut ea velimus scripturarum esse quae nostra est. De Genesi ad literam. lib. i. 37. § Schol. in Thueyd.

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selves to be much discountenanced, if others think not as we do. So that the complaint which one makes concerning the dissension of physicians about the diseases of our bodies, is true likewise in these disputes which concern the cure of our souls. 'From hence have sprung those miserable contentions about the distemper of our *souls*, singularity alone, and that we will not seem to stand as cyphers to make up the sum of other men's opinions, being cause enough to make us disagree.*' A fault antiently amongst the Christians so apparent, that it needed not an apostolical spirit to discover it, the very heathen themselves, to our shame and confusion, have justly, judiciously, and sharply taxt us for it. Ammianus Marcellinus passing his censure upon Constantius the Emperor: 'The Christian religion,' saith he, and they are words well worth your marking, 'the Christian religion, a religion of great simplicity and perfection, he troubled with dotage and superstition. For going about rather perplexedly to search the controversies, than gravely to compose them, he raised great stirs, and by disputing, spread them far and wide, whilst he went about to make himself sole lord and commander of the whole profession †.' Now (that it may appear where,

* Hinc illae circa aegros miserae sententiarum concertationes, nullo idem censente, nè videatur accessio alterius. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxix. c. 5.

† Christianam religionem absolutam et simplicem anili su-

fore I have noted this) it is no hard thing for a man that hath wit, and is strongly posselt of an opinion, and resolute to maintain it, to find some places of scripture, which by good handling will be wooed to cast a favourable countenance upon it. Pythagoras's scholars having been bred up in the doctrine of numbers, when afterward they diverted upon the studies of nature, fancied unto themselves somewhat in natural bodies like unto numbers, and thereupon fell into a conceit, that numbers were the principles of them. So fares it with him, that to the reading of scripture comes fore-posselt with some opinion. As Antipheron Orietes in Aristotle* thought, that every where he saw his own shape and picture going afore him: so in divers parts of scripture where these men walk, they will easily persuade themselves, that they see the image of their own conceits.

It was, and is to this day, a fashion in the hotter countreys, at noon, when the sun is in his strength, to retire themselves to their closets or beds, if they were at home, to cool and shady places, if they were abroad, to avoid the inconvenience of the heat of it. To this the Spouse in the

perstitutione confundens. In qua scrutanda perplexius quam componenda gratius, excitavit dissidia plurima, quae progressa fufius aluit concertatione verborum, — dum ritum omnem ad suum trahere conatur arbitrium. Lib. xxi. c. 16.

* Meteor. lib. iii. c. 4. ibique Alexander Aphrodisaeus et Olympiodorus.

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Canticles alluding, calls after her beloved as after a shepherd, 'Shew me, O thou, whom my soul loveth, 'where thou feedest thy flock, where thou doest rest 'at noon.' Cant. i. 7. The Donatists conceiving unto themselves, that the church was shut up in them alone, being urged by the fathers to shew how the church, being universal, came on a sudden thus to be confined to Afric: they had presently their scripture for it, for so they found it written in the Canticles, 'Shew me, O thou whom my soul loveth, 'where thou feedest thy flock, where thou dost rest 'at noon.' In which text, *meridies*, 'noon,' doubtless, as they thought, was their southern country of Afric, where the shepherd of Israel was, and no where else, to feed his flocks. I may not trouble you with instances in this kind: little observation is able to furnish the man of slenderest reading with abundance. The texts of Scripture which are specially subject to this abuse, are those that are of ambiguous and doubtful meaning. For as Thucydides observes of 'the fat and fertile places 'of Greece, that they were evermore the occasions 'of stirs and seditions*:' the neighbouring nations every one striving to make itself lord of them; so is it with these places that are so fertile, as it were, of interpretation, and yield a multiplicity of sense: they are the school of exercises for good

* Μάλιστα δὲ τῆς γῆς ἡ ἀρίστη αἰὲν τὰς μεταβολὰς τῶν οἰκητόρων ἔχειν. Lib. i. c. 2.

wits to prove masteries in, where every one desires to be lord and absolute.

A *second* thing occasioning us to transgress against scripture, and the discreet and sober handling of it, is our too quick and speedy entrance upon the practice of interpreting it, in our young and green years, before that time and experience have ripened us, and settled our conceits. For that which in all other business, and here likewise doth most especially commend us, is our cautelous and wary handling it. But this is a flower seldom seen in youth's garden; Aristotle differencing age and youth, makes it a property of youth, 'to suppose they know all things, and to be bold in affirming*:' and the Heathen rhetorician could tell us, that by this so speedy entring upon action, and so timely venting our crude and unconcocted studies, 'a thing which in all cases is most pernicious; presumption is greater than strength†;' after the manner of those, who are lately recovered out of some great sickness, in whom appetite is stronger than digestion. These are they who take the greatest mysteries of Christian religion, to be the fittest arguments to spend themselves upon. So Eckius in his Chrysopassus, a work of his so termed, wherein he discusses the question of predestination, in the very entrance of his work tells us,

* Πάντα ἀδύναμι οἰσθῆναι ἔστι διανοησθῆναι. Rhet. lib. ii. c. 14.

† Quod est ubique perniciosissimum, praevenit vires fiducia. Quintil. Inst. Orat. lib. xii. c. 5.

That he therefore enterprized to handle this argument, because, forsooth, he thought it to be the fittest question in which he might 'exercise his youthful and ardent fancy*.' The antient masters of fence amongst the Romans, were wont to set up a post, and cause their young scholars to practise upon it, and to foin and fight with it, as with an adversary. Instead of a post, this young fencer hath set himself up one of the deepest mysteries of our profession, to practise his freshman-ship upon. Which quality, when once it finds scripture for its object, how great inconvenience it brings with it, needs no large discourse to prove. St. Jerom, a man not too easily brought on to acknowledge the errors of his writings, among those few things which he doth retract, censures nothing so sharply as the mistake of his youth in this kind: He thought it one of the greatest sins of his youth, 'That being carried away through an inconsiderate heat in his studies of scripture, he adventured to interpret Obadiah the prophet allegorically, when as yet he knew not the historical meaning†.' Old men, saith our best natural master, by reason of the experience of their often mistakes, are hardly brought constantly to affirm any thing, 'they will always cautelously interline their speech-

* *Juveniles calores exercere.*

† *In adolescentia provocatus ardore et studio scripturarum, allegoricè interpretatus sum Abdiam prophetam cujus historiam nesciebam. Præfat. in Abdiam.*

‘es with *it may bees*, and *peradventures* *,’ and other such particles of wariness and circumspection. This old men’s modesty, of all other things best fits us in perusing those hard and obscure texts of holy scripture. Out of which conceit it is, that we see St. Austin, in his books *de Genesi ad literam*, to have written only by way of questions and interrogations, after the manner of Aristotle in his Problems, ‘That he might not’ (for so he gives his reason) ‘by being over positive prejudice others, and peradventure truer interpretations: that every one might chuse according to his liking; and where his understanding cannot attain unto the sense of it, let him give that honour and reverence which is due unto the scripture, and carry himself with that awe and respect which befits him †.’ Wherefore not without especial providence it is, that the Holy Ghost, by St. Paul, giving precepts to Timothy, concerning the quality of those who were to be admitted to the distributing of God’s holy word, expressly prescribes against a *young scholar*, ‘lest, saith he, he be puffed up.’ 1 Tim. iii. 6. For as it hath been noted of men, who are

* Προσθετασιν αὐτὸ τὸ ἸΣΩΣ εἰς τὸ ΤΑΧΑ. Arist. Rhet. lib. ii. c. 15.

† Non aliquid unum temere affirmans cum praejudicio alterius expositionis fortasse melioris, ut pro suo modulo eligat quisque quod capere possit: ubi autem intelligere non potest, scripturae Dei det honorem, sibi timorem. De Genesi ad litteram, lib. i. 40.

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lately grown rich, that they differ from other rich men only in this, 'That commonly they have all 'the faults that rich men have, and many more*:' so is it as true in those who have lately attained to some degree and mediocrity of knowledge. Look what infirmities learned men have, the same have they in greater degree, and many more besides. Wherefore if Hippocrates in his Physician required these two things, 'great industry, and long 'experience,' the one as tillage to sow the seed, the other as time and season of the year to bring it to maturity †: then certainly by so much the more are these two required in the spiritual physician, by how much he is the physician to a more excellent part.

I will add yet one *third* motioner to this abuse of scriptures, and that is, The too great presumption upon the strength and subtilty of our own wits. That which the Roman priest sometimes told an over-pleasant and witty Vestal Virgin, 'The Gods ought to be worshipped, not curious-

* Τῷ ᾧ πάντα μᾶλλον ἢ φαυλότερα κακὰ ἔχον τὸς νοπλύτης. Arist. Rhet. lib. ii. c. 18.

† Ἐστὶ δὲ ΦΙΛΟΠΟΝΙΗΝ προεργάσασθαι εἰς ΧΡΟΝΟΝ ΠΟΛΥΤΗΝ, ὥστε ἡ μάθησις ἐμψυσθῆσα, δέξιαι τε καὶ εὐαλδίαι πρὸς καρτὺς ἐξενέγκηται. Ὅμοιόν γάρ τῶν ἐν τῇ γῇ φυεμένων θεωρεῖν, τοίηδε καὶ τῆς ἱατρικῆς ἡ μάθησις, ἡ μὲν γὰρ φύσις ἡμῶν, ὁκοῖον δὲ χῶρον, τὰ δὲ δόγματα τῶν διδασκόντων, ὁκοῖον τὰ σπέρματα, ἡ δὲ παιδομαθία, τὸ κατ' ὥρην αὐτὰ πύσιν εἰς τὴν ἀφύραν. Hippocrat. Lex.

* ly, but in the simplicity of a pious mind*, hath in this great work of exposition of scripture an especial place. The holy things of God must be handled with fear and reverence, not with wit and dalliance. The dangerous effects of this have appeared, not in the green tree only, in young heads, but in men of constant age, and great place in the church. For this was that which undid Origen, a man of as great learning and industry, as ever the church had any; whilst in the sublimity of his wit, in his comments on scripture, conceiving meteors and airy speculations, he brought forth those dangerous errors, which drew upon his person the church's heaviest censure, and upon posterity the loss of his works. Subtile-witted men in nothing so much miscarry as in the too much pleasing themselves in the goodness of their own conceits; where the like sometimes befalls them which befel Zeuxis the painter, who having to the life pictured an old woman, so pleased himself with the conceit of his work, that he died with laughing at it. Heliodorus bishop of Tricca in Thessaly, the author of the Ethiopic story, a polite and elegant, I confess, but a loose and wanton work, being summoned by a provincial synod, was told, that which was true, That his work did rather endanger the manners, than profit the wits of his reader, as nourishing loose and wanton conceits in

* Coli Deos sancte magis quam scite.

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the heads of youth: and having his choice given him, either to abolish his work, or to leave his bishopric; not willing to lose the reputation of wit, chose rather to resign his place in the church, and as I verily think, his part in heaven †. And not in private persons alone, but even in whole nations, shall we find remarkable examples of miscarriage in this kind. The Grecians, till barbarism began to steal in upon them, were men of wondrous subtilty of wit, and naturally over-indulgent unto themselves in this quality. Those deep and subtile heresies concerning the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, the union and division of the Divine Substance and persons, were all of them begotten in the heat of their wits; yea, by the strength of them were they conceived, and born, and brought to that growth, that if it had been possible for the gates of hell to prevail against the church, they would have prevailed this way. Wherefore as God dealt with his own land, which being sometimes the mirror of the world for fertility and abundance of all things, now lies subject to many curses, and especially to that of barrenness: so at this day is it with Greece, where sometimes was the flow and luxury of wit, now is there nothing but extreme barbarism and

† Would that the author had not drawn a conclusion so harsh from a tale of such dubious credit as this related by Nicephorus alone. Vid. Valesium ad Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 22.

stupidity. It is in this respect so degenerated, that it scarcely for some hundreds of years hath brought forth a child that carries any shew of his father's countenance: God as it were purposely plaguing their miserable posterity with extreme want of that, the abundance of which their fathers did so wantonly abuse.

The reason of all, that hitherto I have in this point delivered, is this, sharpness of wit hath commonly with it two ill companions, pride, and levity. By the first it comes to pass, that men know not how to yield to another man's reasonable positions; by the second, they know not how to keep themselves constant to their own. It was an excellent observation of the wise Grecian, 'Sad and dull spirited men usually manage matters of state better than quick and nimble wits*.' For such for the most part have not learned that lesson, the meaning of that voice that came to the Pythagorean, that was desirous to remove the ashes of his dead friend out of his grave, 'Things lawfully settled and composed must not be moved †.' 'Men over busy,' saith Julian, 'are by nature unfit to govern ‡:' for they move all things, and leave nothing without question and innovation:

* Οἱ τε φαυλότεροι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, πρὸς τὴς ζυμωτικῆς, ὡς ἐπιτοκλῶγον αἰμῶνος οἰκῶσι τὰς πόλεις. Thucyd. lib. iii. §. 37.

† Ἀκούσαι φωνῆς ἰδοῦσα, τὰ ἀκίνητα μὴ κινεῖν. Plutarch. de Daemon. Socrat.

‡ Ἀνικητάδης φύσιν προσατεύον δῆμον πολυπράγμων ἀνὴρ.

' Making the right somewhat righter,' as Nazianzen speaks, out of desire to amend what is already well *. And therefore we see that for the most part such, if they be in place of authority, by unseasonable and unnecessary tampering, put all things into tumult and combustion. Not the commonwealth alone, but the church likewise hath received the like blow from these kind of men. Nazianzen, discoursing concerning the disorders committed in the handling of controversies, speaks it plainly, ' Great wits, hot and fiery dispositions have raised these tumults. From these it is' (saith he) ' that Christians are so divided. We are no longer a tribe and a tribe, Israel and Judah, two parts of a small nation : but we are divided kindred against kindred, family against family, yea, a man against himself †.'

But I must hasten to my second general part, The persons here accounted guilty of abuse of scripture.

The persons are noted unto us in two epithets, ' unlearned, unstable.' *First*, ' unlearned.' It was St. Jerom's complaint, that practitioners of other

* Τὸ δι᾽ οὗ ποιούμενοι τι διξιώτερον.

† Φύσεις θερμαὶ ἔ μεγάλαι τῆς παραχῆς ταύτης αἰτίον ——— ἔ τὸ τό ἐστιν ὡς ἐπιτεπλῆσεν, ὃ δίδασκας μέλη ——— ἔ γεγόναμεν ὃ φυλὴ ἔ φυλὴ καθ' ἑαυτήν, ὃ πάλαι ὁ Ἰσραὴλ ἀνεδίξτε, οὐδὲ Ἰσραὴλ ἔ Ἰούδας, τὰ δύο ἔ ἐνὸς ἔθνους ἔ μικρῷ τότε τμήματα, κατ' οἶκους καὶ συζυγίας τὰς ἀναγκαίας, καὶ οἷον πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἑκάστος ἐμερίσθημεν. Orat. xxvi.

arts could contain themselves within the bounds of their own profession, 'The art of interpreting the scriptures is the only art, whereof every one, without distinction, assumes the knowledge. This the talkative old woman, the aged dotard, the wordy sophist, this all men confidently take upon themselves, mangling the scriptures, and pretending to teach, untaught*.' Every one presumes much upon his skill, and therefore to be a teacher of scripture: as if this great mystery of 'Christianity' (so Nazianzen speaks) 'were but some one of the common, base, inferior, and contemptible trades†.' I speak not this as if I envied, that all, even the meanest of the Lord's people should prophecy: but only that all kind of men may know their bounds, that no unlearned beast touch the hill, lest he be thrust through with a dart. It is true which we have heard, 'The unlearned arise and take the kingdom of heaven by violence:' they arise indeed, but it is as St. Paul speaks of the resurrection, 'every man in his own order.' 1 Cor. xv. 23. Scripture is given to all, to learn: but to teach, and to interpret, only to a few. This bold intrusion therefore of the unlearned into the chair of the teacher, is that which

* Sola scripturarum ars est, quam sibi omnes passim vindicant. Hanc garrula anus, hanc delirus senex, hanc sophista verbosus, hanc universi praesumunt, lacerant, docent antequam discant.

† Ὡς κινδυνεύον τεχνόδριον εἶναι τὸ μίγα ἡμῶν μυστήριον.

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here, with our blessed apostle, I am to reprehend. Learning in general is nothing else, but the competent skill of any man in whatsoever he professes. Usually we call by this name only our polite and academical studies; but indeed it is common to every one, that is well skilled, well practised in his own mystery. 'The unlearned,' therefore, whom here our apostle rebukes, is not he that hath not read a multiplicity of authors, or that is not as Moses was, skilful in all the learning of the Egyptians: but he that taking upon him to divide the word of God, is yet but raw and unexperienced; or if he have had experience, wants judgment to make use it. Scripture is never so unhappy, as when it falls into these men's fingers. That which old Cato said of the Grecian physicians, 'If those men once bring in their learning among us, they will corrupt all things*,' is most true of these men; whensoever they shall begin to tamper with Scripture, and vent in writing their raw conceits, they will corrupt and defile all they touch. 'For what trouble and anguish these rash presumers' (as St. Austin complaineth) 'bring unto the discreeter sort of the brethren, cannot sufficiently be exprest; when being convinced of their rotten and ungrounded opinions, for the maintaining of that which with great levity and

* *Quandocunque ista gens literas suas dabit, omnia corruptet.* Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xix. c. 1.

‘ open falshood they have averred, they pretend
 ‘ the authority of these sacred books, and repeat
 ‘ much of them even by heart, as bearing witness
 ‘ to what they hold: whereas indeed they do but
 ‘ pronounce the words; but understand not ei-
 ‘ ther what they speak, or of what things they do
 ‘ affirm †.’ Belike as he that bought Orpheus’s
 harp, thought it would of itself make admirable me-
 lody, how unskilfully soever he touched it: so
 these men suppose, that scripture will sound won-
 derful musically, if they do but strike it, with how
 great infelicity and incongruity soever it be. The
 reason of these men’s offence against scripture, is
 the same with the cause of their miscarriage in ci-
 vil actions: ‘ Rude men,’ (saith Thucydides) ‘ men
 ‘ of little experience, are commonly most peremp-
 ‘ tory: but men experienced, and such as have
 ‘ waded in business, are slow of determination ‡.’
 Quintilian making a question, why unlearned men
 seem many times to be more copious than the

† *Quid enim molestiae tristitiaeque ingerant prudentibus
 fratribus temerarii praesumptores, satis dici non potest; cum
 si quando de prava et falsa opinione sua reprehendi et convinci
 coeperint ab eis, qui nostrorum librorum auctoritate non te-
 nentur, ad defendendum id quod levissima temeritate et aper-
 tissima fallitate dixerunt, eosdem libros sanctos, unde id pro-
 bent, proferre conantur, vel etiam memoriter, quae ad testi-
 monium valere arbitrantur, multa inde verba pronunciant, non
 intelligentes neque quae loquuntur, neque de quibus affirmant.
 De Genesi ad literam, lib. i. 39.*

‡ *Ἀμαθία μὲν δράσας, λογισμὸς δὲ ὀκνοῖ φέρει. Lib. ii. §. 40.*

learned, (for commonly such men never want matter of discourse) answers, That it is, because whatsoever conceit comes into their heads, without care or choice they broach it; 'whereas learned men 'are choice in their invention, and lay by much 'of that which offers itself *.' 'Wise hearted 'men, in whom the Lord hath put wisdom and 'understanding, to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary,' Exod. xxxvi. 1. like Bezaleel and Aholiab, refuse much of the stuff which is presented them. But this kind of men, whom here our Apostle notes, are naturally men of bold and daring spirits, as St. Jerome speaks, 'Whatsoever conceit is begotten in 'their heads, the Spirit of God is presently the father of it.' But to leave these men, and to speak a little more home unto mine own auditory: let us a little consider, not the weakness of these men, but the greatness of the business, the manage of which they undertake. So great a thing as the skill of exposition of the word and gospel is, so fraught with multiplicity of authors, so full of variety of opinion, must needs be confessed to be a matter of great learning, and that cannot, especially in our days, in short time, with a mediocrity of indu-

* Cum doctis est electio et modus. Inst. Orat. lib. ii. c. 12.

† Quicquid dixerint hoc legem Dei putant; nec scire dignantur quid prophetæ, quid apostoli senserint, sed ad suum sensum incongrua aptant testimonia. Epist. lib. ii. Paulino.

stry, be attained. For if in the Apostles times, when as yet much of scripture was scarcely written, when God wrought with men miraculously, to inform their understanding, and supplied by revelation what man's industry could not yield; if, I say, in these times St. Paul required 'diligent reading,' 1 Tim. iv. 13. and expressly forbade greenness of scholarship: much more then are these conditions required in our times, wherein God doth not supply by miracle our natural defects, and yet the burden of our profession is infinitely encreased. All that was necessary in the Apostles times, is now necessary, and much more. For if we add unto the growth of Christian learning, as it was in the Apostles times, but this one circumstance (to say nothing of all the rest) which naturally befalls our times, and could not be required at the hands of those who guided the first ages of the church: that is, the knowledge of the state and succession of doctrine in the church from time to time; a thing very necessary for the determining the controversies of these our days: how great a portion of our labour and industry would this alone require? Wherefore if Quintilian thought it necessary to admonish young men, that they should not presume themselves 'sufficiently provided with knowledge, and as having the sanction of the learned in their favour, merely by being masters of some short and com-

'mon manual of rhetoric †.' If he thought fit thus to do in an art of so inferior and narrow a sphere, much more is it behoveful, that young students, in so high, so spacious, so large a profession, be advised not to think themselves sufficiently provided, upon their acquaintance with some *notitia*, or system of some technical divine. Look upon those sons of Anak, those giant-like voluminous writers of Rome, in regard of whom, our little tractates, and pocket-volumes in this kind, what are they but as grasshoppers? I speak not this like some seditious or factious spy, to bring weakness of hands, or melting of heart, upon any of God's people: but to stir up and kindle in you the spirit of industry, to enlarge your conceits, and not to suffer your labours to be copst and mued up within the poverty of some pretended method. I will speak as Joshua did to his people, 'Let us not fear the people of that land, they are as meat unto us, their shadow is departed from them: the Lord is with us, fear them not.' Numb. xiv. 9. Only let us not think, that the conquest will be gotten by sitting still and wishing all were well ‡: or that the walls of these strong cities will fall down, if we only walk about them, and blow rams

† — Satis instructos, si quem ex iis, qui breves circumferuntur, artis libellum edidicerint, et velut decretis technicorum tutos putent. Inst. Orat. lib. ii. c. 13.

‡ Stultitia est sedendo aut votis debellari credere posse. Liv. hist. lib. xxii. c. 14.

horns. But as the voice of God's people sometime was, 'by the sword of God and of Gideon,' Judg. vii. 18. so that which here gives the victory must be the grace of God and our industry. For by this circumsised, narrow, and penurious form of study, we shall be no more able to keep pace with them, than a child can with Hercules. But I forbear, and pass away unto the *second* epithet, by which these rackers of scriptures are, by St. Peter, stiled 'unstable.'

In the learning which the world teaches, it were almost a miracle to find a man constant to his own tenets. For not to doubt in things in which we are conversant, is either by reason of excellency and serenity of understanding, thoroughly apprehending the main principles on which all things are grounded, together with the descrying of the several passages from them unto particular conclusions, and the diverticles and blind by-paths which sophistry and deceit are wont to tread; and such a man can nature never yield: or else it is through a senseless stupidity, like unto that in the common sort of men, who conversing among the creatures, and beholding the course of heaven, and the heavenly host, yet never attend them, neither ever sinks it into their heads to marvel, or question these things so full of doubt and difficulty. Even such a one is he, that learns theology in the school of nature, if he seem to participate of any settledness or composedness of conscience; either it never

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comes into his head to doubt of any of those things, with which the world hath inured him: or if it doth, it is to no great purpose, he may smother and strangle, he can never resolve his doubt. The reason of which is this, it lies not in the world's power to give, in this case, a text of sufficient authority to compose and fix the thoughts of a soul, that is disposed to doubt. But this great inconvenience, which held the world in uncertainty, by the providence of God is prevented in the church. For unto it is left a certain, undoubted, and sufficient authority, able to exalt every valley, and lay low every hill, to smooth all rubs, and make our way so open and passable, that little enquiry serves. So that as it were a wonder in the school of nature, to find one settled and resolved; so might it seem a marvel that in the church any man is unstable, unresolved. Yet notwithstanding, even here is the unstable man found too, and to his charge the apostle lays this sin of wresting of scripture. For since that it is confessed at all hands, that the sense and meaning of scripture is the rule and ground of our Christian tenets, whensoever we alter them, we must needs give a new sense unto the word of God. So that the man that is unstable in his religion, can never be free from violating of scripture. The especial cause of this levity and flitting disposition in the common and ordinary sort of men, is their disability to discern of the strength of such reasons, as may be framed against

them. For which cause they usually start, and many times fall away, upon every objection that is made. In which too sudden entertainment of objections, they resemble the state of those, who are lately recovered out of some long sickness, who never more wrong themselves, than by suspecting every alteration of their temper, and being affrighted at every little passion of heat, as if it were an ague-fit *. To bring these men therefore unto a right temper, and to purchase them a settledness of mind; that temper that St. Austin doth require in him that reads his book, 'I would wish,' says he, 'to have for judges of my writings, men 'who do not require an answer to every objection 'that is made against them.' The same temper must be found in every reader of scripture; he must not be at a stand, and require an answer to every objection that is made against them. For as the philosopher tells us, that mad and fantastical men are very apprehensive of all outward accidents, because their soul is inwardly empty and unfurnished of any thing of worth which might hold the inward attention of their minds: so when we are so easily pozed and amazed with every sophism,

* Qui cum reliquias effugerint, suspicionibus tamen inquietantur, et omnem calorem corporis sui calumniantur. Senec. de tranq. anim. ii.

† Tales meorum scriptorum velim iudices, qui responsionem non semper desiderent, quum his quae leguntur audierint aliquid contradici.

it is a certain argument of great defect of inward furniture and worth, which should, as it were, balance the mind, and keep it upright against all outward occurrents whatsoever. And be it that many times, the means to open such doubts be not at hand, yet, as St. Austin sometime spake unto his scholar Licentius, concerning such advice and counsel as he had given him: so much more must we thus resolve of those lessons which God teacheth us; 'the reasons and grounds of them, though they might be given, yet it fits not that credit and trust which we owe him, once to search in to, or call in question *.' And so I come to the *third* general part, the danger of wresting of scripture, in the last words, 'unto their own damnation.'

The reward of every sin is death. As the worm eats out the heart of the plant that bred it, so whatsoever is done amiss, naturally works no other end but destruction of him that doth it. As this is true in general, so it is as true, that when the scripture doth precisely note out unto us some sin, and threatens death unto it, it is commonly an argument, that there is more than ordinary, that there is some especial sin, which shall draw with it some especial punishment. This sin of wresting of scripture in the eye of some of the antients, seemed so

* Nolo te causas rationesque rimari, quae etiam si reddi possint, fidei tamen, qua mihi credis non eas debeo. Epist. xxvi.

ugly, that they have ranged it in the same rank with the sin against the Holy Ghost. And therefore they have pronounced it a sin 'greater than can be pardoned *.' For the most part of other sins are sins of infirmity or simplicity, but this is a sin of wit and strength: the man that doth it, doth it with a high hand; he knows, and sees, and resolves upon it.

Again, Scripture is the voice of God: and it is confest by all, that the sense is scripture, rather than the words. It cannot therefore be avoided, but he that wilfully strives to fasten some sense of his own upon it, other than the very nature of the place will bear, must needs take upon him the person of God, and become a new inditer of scripture: and all that applaud and give consent unto any such, in effect cry the same that the people did to Herod, 'The voice of God, and not of man.' Acts xii. 22. If he then that abases the prince's coin deserves to die, what is *his* desert, that instead of the tried silver of God's word, stamps the name and character of God upon Nehushtan, upon base brazen stuff of his own?

Thirdly, 'No scripture is of private interpretation,' saith the Apostle, 2 Pet. i. 20. There can therefore be but two certain and infallible interpreters of scripture; either itself, or the Holy

* Οἱ τῆς θεῆς χρησμός παραποιῶντες, ἔκ πρὸς τὸ οἰκεῖον βίβλῳ μα ἐκβιάζομενοι, ΣΤΙΓΓΝΩ' ΜΗΣ 'ΑΜΑΡΤΑΝΟΤΣΙ ΜΕΛ' ΟΝΑ.
Isidor. Pelusiota, lib. ii. epist. 254.

Ghost the author of it. Itself doth then expound itself, when the words and circumstances do sound unto us the prime, and natural, and principal sense. But when the place is obscure, involved, and intricate; or when there is contained some secret and hidden mystery, beyond the prime sense; infallibly to shew us this, there can be no interpreter but the Holy Ghost that gave it. Besides these two, all other interpretation is private. Wherefore, as the lords of the Philistines sometime said of the kine that drew the ark unto Bethshemesh, 'If they go of themselves, then is this from God; but if they go another way, then it is not from God, it is some chance that hath happened unto us.' 1 Sam. vi. 9. so may it be said of all pretended sense of scripture. If scripture come unto it of itself, then is it of God: but if it go another way, or if it be violently urged and goaded on, then is it but a matter of chance, of man's wit and invention. As for those marvellous discourses of some, framed upon presumption of the Spirit's help in private, in judging or interpreting of difficult places of scripture, I must needs confess, I have often wondered at the boldness of them. The Spirit is a thing of dark and secret operation, the manner of it none can descry. As underminers are never seen till they have wrought their purpose, so the Spirit is never perceived but by its effects. The effects of the Spirit (as far as they concern knowledge and instruction) are not particular in-

formation for resolution in any doubtful case (for this were plainly revelation) but, as the angel which was sent unto Cornelius informs him not, but sends him to Peter to school: so the Spirit teaches not, but stirs up in us a desire to learn; desire to learn makes us thirst after the means: and pious sedulity and carefulness makes us watchful in the choice, and diligent in the use of our means. The promise to the Apostles of the Spirit which should 'lead them into all truth,' John xvi. 13. was made good unto them by private and secret informing their understandings, with the knowledge of high and heavenly mysteries, which as yet had never entered into the conceit of any man. The same promise is made to us, but fulfilled after another manner. For what was written by revelation in their hearts, for our instruction have they written in their books. To us for information, otherwise than out of these books, the Spirit speaks not. When the Spirit regenerates a man, it infuses no knowledge of any point of faith, but sends him to the church, and to the scriptures. When it stirs him up to newness of life, it exhibits not unto him an inventory of his sins, as hitherto unknown; but either supposes them known in the law of nature, of which no man can be ignorant; or sends him to learn them from the mouth of his teachers. More than this in the ordinary proceeding of the Holy Spirit, in matter of instruction, I yet

could never descry. So that to speak of the help of the Spirit in private, either in dijudicating, or in interpreting of scripture, is to speak they know not what. Which I do the rather note, first, because by experience we have learnt, how apt men are to call their private conceits the Spirit: and again, because it is the especial error with which St. Austin, long ago, charged this kind of men: 'By so much the more prone are they to kindle schism and contention in the church, by how much they seem to themselves to be endued with a more eminent measure of Spirit than their brethren*;' whilst (as St. Basil speaks) 'under pretence of interpretation they violently broach their own conceits †.' Great then is the danger in which they wade, which take upon them this business of interpretation. 'The rashness' (saith St. Austin) 'of those that aver uncertain and doubtful interpretations, for catholic and absolute, can hardly escape the sin of sacrilege ‡.'

But whereas our apostle saith, 'their own destruction,' is the destruction only their own? this were well if it stretched no farther. The antients much complain of this offence, as an hin-

* Tanto sunt ad seditionem faciliores, quanto sibi videntur spiritu excellere.

† Ἐν προσποιήσει ἐξηγήσεως τὰ ἑαυτῷ παρεσάγουσιν.

‡ Temeritas asserendae incertae dubiaeque opinionis, difficile sacrilegii crimen evitat.

derer of the salvation of others. There were in the days of Isidorus Pelusiota some that gave out, that all in the Old Testament was spoken of Christ, belike out of extreme opposition to the Manichees, who on the other side taught, that no text in the Old Testament did foretel of Christ. That father, therefore, dealing with some of that opinion, tells them how great the danger of their tenet is: 'For if,' saith he, 'we strive with violence to draw and apply those texts to Christ, which apparently pertain not to him, we shall gain nothing but this, to make all the places that are spoken of him suspected; and so discredit the strength of other testimonies, which the church usually urges for the refutation of the Jews*.' For in these cases, a wrested proof is like unto a suborned witness; it never doth help so much whilst it is presumed to be strong, as it doth hurt when it is discovered to be weak. St. Austin sharply reproves some Christians, who out of some places of scripture misunderstood, framed unto themselves a kind of knowledge in astronomy and physiology, quite contrary unto some part of heathen learning in this kind, which were true and evident unto sense. A man would think that this were but a small error, and yet he doubts not to call it 'Exceedingly shameful, pernicious, and above all things to

* Τα γὰρ μὴ εἰς αὐτὸν ἑρμηνεία ἐκδιαιρούμενοι, καὶ τὰ ἀξίως ἑρμηνεία ὑποκτείνεσθαι παρασκευάζουσιν. Lib. ii. Epist. 195.

‘be avoided †.’ His reason warrants the roundness of his reproof; for he charges such to have been a scandal unto the word, and hinderers of the conversion of some heathen men that were scholars: ‘For how,’ saith he, ‘shall they believe our books of scripture, persuading the resurrection of the dead, the kingdom of heaven, and the rest of the mysteries of our profession, if they find them faulty in these things, of which themselves have undeniable demonstration?’ Yea, though the cause we maintain be never so good, yet the issue of diseased and crazy proofs brought to maintain it, must needs be the same. For unto all causes, be they never so good, weakness of proof, when it is discovered, brings great prejudice, but unto the cause of religion most of all. St. Austin observed, that there were some, ‘who, whenever any Christian is falsely reported or actually proved to be guilty of a crime, endeavour with unremitting diligence, to make it believed that all Christians are alike guilty ‡.’ It fares no otherwise with religion itself, than it doth with the professors of it. Divers malignants there are, who lie in wait to espy where our reasons on which we

† Turpe nimis, et perniciosum et maxime cavendum. De Genes. ad Literam. lib. i. 39.

‡ Qui cum de aliquibus, qui sanctum nomen profitentur, aliquid criminis vel falsi sonuerit, vel veri patuerit, instant, fatagunt, ambiunt ut de omnibus hoc credatur. Epist. lxxviii. §. 6.

build are weak, and having deprehended it in some, will earnestly solicit the world to believe that all are so, if means were made to bring it to light; as Nazianzen speaks, 'using for advantage against us no strength of their own, but the vice and imbecillity of our defence †.' The book of the Revelation is a book full of wonder and mystery: the antients seem to have made a religion to meddle with it, and thought it much better to admire with silence, than to adventure to expound it: and therefore amongst their labours in exposition of scripture, scarcely is there any one found that hath touched it. But our age hath taken better heart; and scarcely any one is there, who hath entertained a good conceit of his own abilities, but he hath taken that book as a fit argument to spend his pains on. That the church of Rome hath great cause to suspect herself, to fear lest she have a great part in the prophecies in that book, I think the most partial will not deny. Yet unto the expositors of it, I will give this advice, that they look that that befall not them, which Thucydides observes to befall the common sort of men: who though they have good means to acquit themselves like men, yet when they think their best hopes fail them, and begin to despair of their strength, comfort themselves with interpretations of certain dark and obscure prophecies. Many plain texts of scrip-

† Οὐκ ἐν τοῖς ἰαυτῶν δόγμασι τὴν ἰσχύον ἔχοντες, ἀλλ' ἐν τοῖς ἡμετέρων σαθεῖς ταύτην διηρμύοντες.

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ture are very pregnant, and of sufficient strength to overthrow the points maintained by that church against us. If we leave these, and ground ourselves upon our private expositions of this book, we shall justly seem in the poverty of better proofs, to rest ourselves upon those prophecies; which, though in themselves they are most certain, yet our expositions of them must (except God give yet further light unto his church) necessarily be mixt with much uncertainty, as being at the best but improbable* conjectures of our own. Scarcely can there be found a thing more harmful to religion, than to vent thus our own conceits, and obtrude them upon the world for necessary and absolute. The physician's skill, as I conceive of it, stands as much in opinion, as any that I know whatsoever; yet their greatest master Hippocrates tells them directly, 'Than the physician's presumption upon
' opinion, there is not one thing that brings either
' more blame to himself, or danger to his patient †.' If it be thus in an art, which, opinion taken away, must needs fall; how little room then must opinion have in that knowledge, where nothing can have place but what is of eternal truth, where if once we admit of opinion, all is overthrown? But I conclude this point, adding only

* Ought not we to read *probable*?

† Οἷσις γὰρ μάλιστα ἐν ἰατρικῇ, αἰτίν μὲν τοῖσι κερημένοι-
σιν, ὀλεθρον δὲ τοῖσι χρημένοισιν ἐπιφέρει. Hippocrat. de decenti
habitu. c. 2.

this general admonition, That we be not too peremptory in our positions; where express text of scripture fails us; that we lay not our own collections and conclusions with too much precipitancy. For experience hath shewed us, that the error and weakness of them being afterwards discovered, brings great disadvantage to Christianity, and trouble to the church. The Eastern Church, before St. Basil's time, had entertained generally a conceit, that those Greek particles, *ἐν, σὺν, διὰ*, and the rest, were so divided among the Trinity, that each of the persons had his particle, which was no way applicable to the rest. St. Basil having discovered this to be but a niceness and needless curiosity, beginning to teach so, raised in the church such a tumult, that he brought upon himself a great labour of writing many tracts in apology for himself, with much ado, ere matters could again be settled. The fault of this was not in Basil, who religiously fearing what by way of consequence might ensue upon an error, taught a truth; but in the church, who formerly had with too much facility admitted a conclusion so justly subject to exception. And let this suffice for our *third* part.

Now because it is apparent, that the end of this our apostle's admonition is to give the church a caveat how she behave herself in handling of scripture, give me leave a little, instead of the use of such doctrines as I have formerly laid down, to shew you, as far as my conceit can stretch, what

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course any man may take to save himself from offering violence unto scripture, and reasonably fettle himself, any pretended obscurity of the text whatsoever notwithstanding. For which purpose, the diligent observing of two rules shall be thoroughly available: First, The literal, plain, and uncontroversable meaning of scripture, without any addition or supply by way of interpretation, is that alone which for ground of faith we are necessarily bound to accept, except it be there where the Holy Ghost himself treads us out another way. I take not this to be any peculiar conceit of mine, but that unto which our church stands necessarily bound. When we receded from the church of Rome, one motive was, because she added unto scripture her glosses as canonical, to supply what the plain text of scripture could not yield. If in place of her's, we set up our own glosses, thus to do, were nothing else but to pull down Baal, and set up an ephod; to run round, and meet the church of Rome again in the same point in which at first we left her. But the plain, evident, and demonstrative ground of this rule, is this: *That* authority which doth warrant our faith unto us, must every way be free from all possibility of error. For let us but once admit of this, that there is any possibility that any one point of faith should not be true; if it be once granted that I may be deceived in what I have believed, how can I be assured that in the end I shall not be deceived? If the author

of faith may alter, or if the evidence and assurance that he hath left us be not pregnant, and impossible to be defeated, there is necessarily opened an inlet to doubtfulness and wavering, which the nature of faith excludes.

That faith therefore may stand unshaken, two things are of necessity to concur. First, That the author of it be such a one as can by no means be deceived, and this can be none but God. Secondly, That the words and text of this author upon whom we ground, must admit of no ambiguity, no uncertainty of interpretation. 'If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall provide himself to battle.' 1 Cor. xiv. 8. If the words admit a double sense, and I follow one, who can assure me that that which I follow is the truth? For infallibility either in judgment, or interpretation, or whatsoever, is annexed neither to the see of any bishop, nor to the fathers, nor to the councils, nor to the church, nor to any created power whatsoever. This doctrine of the literal sense was never grievous or prejudicial to any, but only to those who were inwardly conscious that their positions were not sufficiently grounded. When Cardinal Cajetan, in the days of our grandfathers, had forsaken that vein of postilling and allegorising on scripture, which for a long time had prevailed in the church, and betaken himself unto the literal sense; it was a thing so distasteful unto the church of Rome, that he was forced to find out many

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shifts, and make many apologies for himself. The truth is, (as it will appear to him that reads his writings) this sticking close to the literal sense was that alone, which made him to shake many of those tenets, upon which the church of Rome and the reformed churches differ. But when the importunity of the reformers, and the great credit of Calvin's writings in that kind, had forced the divines of Rome to level their interpretations by the same line: when they saw that no pains, no subtilty of wit was strong enough to defeat the literal evidence of scripture, it drave them on those desperate shelves, on which at this day they stick, to call in question, as far as they durst, the credit of the Hebrew text, and countenance against it a corrupt translation; to add traditions unto scripture, and to make the church's interpretation, so pretended, to be above exception. As for that restriction which is usually added to this rule, that the literal sense is to be taken, if no absurdity follow, though I acknowledge it to be sound and good, yet my advice is that we entertain it warily. St. Basil thought the precept of Christ to the rich man in the gospel, 'Go 'sell all that thou hast, and give unto the poor,' Matth. xix. 21. to be spoken as a command universally and eternally binding all Christians without exception. And making this objection, how possibly such a life could be amongst Christians, since where all were sellers, none could

be buyers: 'Ask not me,' saith he, 'the sense of
' my Lord's commands. He that gave the law,
' can provide to give it possibility of being kept,
' without any absurdity at all *.' Which speech
howsoever we may suppose the occasion of it to be
mistaken, yet it is of excellent use to repress our
boldness, whereby many times, under pretence of
some inconvenience, we hinder scripture from that
latitude of sense, of which it is naturally capable.
You know the story of the Roman captain in Gel-
lius, and what he told the ship-wright, that chose
rather to interpret, than to execute his lord's com-
mand; 'The office of the commander is then set
' at nought, when the commanded, instead of due
' obedience, gives unasked advice †.' It will cer-
tainly, in the end, prove safer for us to entertain
God's commandments with the respect which is
due, than to interpret them with a nicety which is
not required. Those other ways of interpretation,
whether it be by allegorising, or allusion, or what-
soever, the best that can be said of them, is that
which St. Basil hath pronounced, 'We account of
' them as of trim, elegant, and witty speeches, but
' we refuse to accept of them, as of undoubted

* Μὴ ῥῆτα μὲν διανοίας δεσποτικῶν προσταγμάτων. οὐδὲν ὁ νο-
μοθετῆρας, ἔ τὸ ἀδύνατον συναρμόσαι τῷ νόμῳ. Homil. in Di-
vites. §. 3.

† Corrupti atque dissolvi omne imperantis officium, si quis
ad id quod facere jussus est non obsequio debito, sed consilio
non desiderato respondeat.

'truths*.' And though of some part of these, that may be said which one said of his own work, 'In respect of any profit comes by them, they are but sport, but in respect of the pains taken in making of them, they are labour and travel†:' yet much of them is of excellent use in private, either to raise our affections, or to spend our meditations, or (so it be with modesty) to practise our gifts of wit to the honour of him that gave them. For if we absolutely condemn these interpretations, then must we condemn a great part of antiquity, who are very much conversant in this kind of interpreting. For the most partial for antiquity cannot chuse but see and confess thus much, that for the literal sense the interpreters of our own times, because of their skill in the original languages, their care of pressing the circumstances and coherence of the text, of comparing like places of scripture with like, have generally surpass the best of the antients. Which I speak not to discountenance antiquity, but that all ages, all persons may have their due. And let this suffice for our first rule.

The Jewish Rabbins, in their comments on scripture, so oft as they met with hard and intricate texts, out of which they could not wrest themselves, were wont to shut up their discourse

* Ὡς κικρομψευμένον μὲν τὸν λόγον ἀποδιχόμιθα, ἀληθὴ δὲ εἶναι
 ὃ πάντῃ δόσομεν.

† Quod ad usum pertinet, lusi, quod ad molestiam laboravi,
 Auson. Technopaeg. xii,

with this, 'Elias shall answer this doubt when he comes *.' Not the Jews only, but the learned Christians of all ages have found many things in scripture, which yet expect Elias. For besides those texts of scriptures, which by reason of the hidden treasures of wisdom, and depth of sense and mystery laid up in them, are not yet conceived, there are in scripture of things that are seemingly confused, carrying semblance of contrariety, anachronisms, metachronisms, and the like, which brings infinite obscurity to the text: there are, I say, in scripture more of them, than in any writing that I know, secular or divine. If we mean not to settle ourselves till all these things are answered, let us take heed lest the like be said to us, which St. Austin said to some of the Gentiles, who refused to believe till all objections were satisfied, 'innumerable are the things not to be ascertained before we believe, lest our life end before we believe†.' The Areopagites in Athens, when they were troubled in a doubtful case, in which they durst not proceed to sentence, were wont to put it off till a day of hearing for some hundred years after; avoiding, by this means, the further being importuned with the suit. To quiet ourselves in these doubts, it will be our best way, to put them to some day of hearing afar off, even till that great

* Elias cum venerit, solvit dubia.

† Sunt enim innumerabiles quae non sunt finiendae ante fidem, ne vitae finiatur sine fide.

day, till Christ, our true Elias, shall come, who at his coming shall answer all our doubts, and settle all our waverings. Mean while, till our Elias come, let us make use of this second rule, In places of ambiguous and doubtful, or dark and intricate meaning, It is sufficient if we religiously admire, and acknowledge, and confess: using that moderation of St. Austin, 'not seeking to support or to overturn either opinion, but only restraining ourselves from presumptuous confidence in our own judgment*.' 'To understand,' (saith one) 'belongs to Christ, the author of our faith; to us is sufficient the glory of believing†.' Wherefore we are to advise, not so much how to attain unto the understanding of the mysteries of scripture, as how it best fits us to carry ourselves, when either the difficulty of the text, or variety of opinions shall distract us. In the sixth general council, Honorius bishop of Rome is condemned for a Monothelite. Two epistles there are of his, which are produced to give evidence against him. For the first, I have nothing to say. For the second, (I speak with submission to better judgments) notwithstanding the sharp proceeding of the council against him, I verily suppose that he gives unto the church the best counsel, that ever yet was given for the settling of doubts, and final decision

* Neutram partem affirmantes sive destruentes, sed tantummodo ab audaci affirmandi praesumptione revocantes.

† Qui credit, satis est illi quod Christus intelligat.

of controversy. For that which he teaches in that epistle, at least in those parts of it which *there* are brought, sounds to no other purpose but this, 'That whereas there was lately raised in the church a controversy concerning the duality or unity of wills in Christ; since that hitherto nothing in the church concerning either part hath been expressly taught, his counsel was, That men would rather cease to doubt, than to be curious to search for any solution of their doubtings; and so abstain from teaching doctrinally either part, and content themselves with that express measure of faith, with which the church hath hitherto rested satisfied *.' This, to my conceit, is the drift of his epistle. How this advice of the bishop's was applicable, or how it fitted the question then in controversy, or what reason moved the council to think that it was absolutely necessary for them to give an express decision, and determine for the one part, belongs not to me to discuss. But I verily persuade myself, that if it had pleased those, who in all ages have been set to govern the church of God, betimes to have made use of this advice, to have taught men rather not to have doubted, than to have expected still solution of their doubtings: to have stopped and dammed up the originals and springs of controversies, rather than by determining for the one part, to give them, as it were, a

* Vid. Harduin. concil. tom. iii. p. 2319. et seq.

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pipe and conduit to convey them to posterity, I persuade myself, the church had not suffered that inundation of opinions, with which, at this day, it is over-run. Is it not St. Paul's own practice, when having brought in a question concerning God's justice in predestination, he gives no other answer but this, 'O man, who art thou that disputest with 'God?' Rom. ix. 20. Is it not his plain purpose to advise the disputer, rather not to make the question, than to require a determination of it at his hands? How many of the questions even of our own times, even of those that are at home amongst us, might by this way long since have been determined? I have, I confess, the same disease that my first parents in paradise had, a desire to know more than I need. But I always thought it a very judicious commendation, which is given to Julius Agricola, 'That he knew how to bridle his desire in pursuit of knowledge*.' 'I would wish,' as St. Austin saith, 'to understand those things concerning which you have enquired of me, but since to this I have not hitherto attained, I rather chuse cautiously to confess my ignorance, than to arrogate to myself a knowledge which I have not†.' It shall well besit our Christian mo-

* Retinuitque, quod est difficillimum, ex scientia modum. Tacit. vit. Agricola. c. 4.

† Mallem quidem eorum quae à me quaesivisti habere scientiam, quam ignorantiam; sed quia id nondum potui, magis eligo cautam ignorantiam confiteri, quam falsam scientiam profiteri.

deſty to participate ſomewhat of the Sceptic, and to uſe their withholding of judgment, till the remainder of our knowledge be ſupplied by Chriſt : ‘ againſt whom, if we are indeed believers in him, ‘ we ought not to murmur, although he ſhould ‘ not always open unto us even when we knock *.’ To conclude, St. Auſtin in his cxcix. epiſtle, diſcourſing of the ſpeedy or ſlow coming of our Saviour to judgment, to ſhew that it is the ſafeſt way to teach neither, but to ſuſpend our belief, and confeſs our ignorance, ranging himſelf with men of this temper ‘ ſuch as I am,’ ſaith he to Heſychius, to whom he writes that epiſtle, ‘ ſuch as ‘ I am, I beſeech you, deſpiſe me not †.’ So give me leave to commence the ſame ſuit to you. Let me requeſt you bear with me, if I be ſuch a one as I have St. Auſtin for example. For it is not depth of knowledge, nor knowledge of antiquity, or ſharpneſs of wit, nor authority of councils, nor the name of the church, can ſettle the reſtleſs conceits that poſſeſs the minds of many doubtful Chriſtians: only to ground for faith on the plain uncontroverſable text of ſcripture, and for the reſt, to expect and pray for the coming of our Elias, this ſhall compoſe our waverings, and give final reſt unto our ſouls.

Thus inſtead of a diſcourſe which was due un-

* In quem ſi credimus, ut ſi aliqua nobis non aperiat etiam pulſantibus, nullo modo adverſus eum murmurare debeamus.

† Obſecro te ut me talem non ſpernas.

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to this time, concerning the glorious resurrection of our blessed Saviour, and the benefits that come unto us by it, I have diverted myself upon another theme, more necessary, as I thought, for this auditory, though less agreeable with this solemnity. Those who have gone afore me in that argument have made so copious a harvest, that the issue of my gatherings must needs have been but small, except I had with Ruth gleaned out of their sheaves, or strained my industry which is but small, and my wits which are none, to have held your attentiveness with new and quaint conceits. In the mean time, whether it be I or they, or whatsoever hath been delivered out of this place, God grant that it may be for his honour, and for the church's good, to whom both it and we are dedicate. 'To God the Father, &c.'

OF
D E A L I N G
W I T H
ERRING CHRISTIANS.

Preached at St. Paul's Cross.

Rom. xiv. 1.

*Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to
doubtful disputations.*

MIGHT it so have pleased God, that I had in my power the choice of my ways, and the free management of my own actions, I had not this day been *seen*, (for so I think I may better speak: *seen* may I be of many, but to be *heard* with any latitude and compass, my natural imperfection doth quite cut off:) I had not, I say, in this place this day been seen; ambition of great and famous auditories I leave to those whose better gifts and inward endowments are admonitioners unto them of the great good they can do, or otherwise thirst after popular applause. Unto my-

self have I evermore applied that of St. Jerom *, a small, a private, a retired auditory, better accords both with my will and my abilities. Those unto whose discretion the furniture of this place is committed, ought especially to be careful, since you come hither to hear, to provide you those who can be heard; for the neglect of this one circumstance, how poor soever it may seem to be, is no less than to offend against that 'faith which cometh by hearing;' and to frustrate, as much as in them is, that end for which alone these meetings were ordained. We that come to this place, as God came to Elias in the mount, in a soft and still voice, to those which are near us, are that which the grace of God doth make us, unto the rest we are but statues: such therefore as my imperfection in this kind shall offend, such as this day are my spectators only, know, I trust, whom they are to blame. At my hands is only required truth in sincerely discharging a common care, at others, care of profitably delivering a common truth. As for me, the end of whose coming is to exhort you to a gracious interpreting of each others imperfections, having first premised this apology for myself, it is now time to descend to the exposition of that scripture, which I have proposed, 'Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations.'

* Mihi sufficit cum auditore et lectore perpauculo in angulo monasterii susurrare.

Goodness, of all the attributes by which a man may be stiled, hath chief place and sovereignty; goodness, I say, not that metaphysical conceit which we dispute of in our schools, and is nothing else but that perfection which is inwardly due unto the being of every creature, and without which, either it is not at all, or but in part, that whose name it bears: but that which the common sort of men do usually understand, when they call a man good; by which is meant nothing else, but 'a soft, and sweet, and flexible disposition*.' For all other excellencies and eminent qualities which raise in the minds of men some opinion and conceit of us, may occasion, peradventure, some strong respect in another kind; but impression of love and true respect, nothing can give but this: greatness of place and authority may make us feared, depth of learning admired, abundance of wealth may make men outwardly obsequious unto us; but that which makes one man a god unto another, that which doth tie the souls of men unto us, that which like the eye of the bridegroom, in the book of Canticles, iv. 9. 'ravishes the heart of him 'that looks upon it,' is goodness: without this, mankind were but (as one speaks) 'Stones heapt together without mortar, or pieces of boards 'without any cement to combine and tie them together†:' For this it hath singular in it, above

* Τὴν ἐν μεγαλύνῳ ἡθός.

† Lenius comptiusque scribendi genus adeo contemnens, ut

all other properties of which our nature is capable, that it is the most available to human society, incorporating, and, as it were. kneading us together by softness of disposition, by being compassionate, by gladly communicating to the necessity of others, by transfusing ourselves into others, and receiving from others into ourselves. All other qualities, how excellent soever they are, seem to be somewhat of a melancholic and solitary disposition; they shine then brightest, when they are in some one alone, or attained unto by few; once make them common, and they lose their lustre: but goodness is more sociable; and rejoiceth in equalling others unto itself, and loses its nature, when it ceases to be communicable. The Heathen, speaking of God, usually stile him by two attributes, *Optimus* and *Maximus*, the one importing his goodness, the other his power. In the first place they called him *Optimus*, a name signifying his goodness, giving the precedency unto it; and in the second place *Maximus*, a name betokening his power: yea, goodness is that wherein God himself doth most delight himself; and therefore all the acts of our Saviour, while he conversed on earth among men, were purely the issues of his tenderness, without any asperision of severity, two only excepted: I mean his chafing the prophaners out of the temple, and the curse laid upon the in-

Senecam tum maxime placentem *commissiones meras componere et arenam esse sine calce diceret.* Sueton. Calig. c. 53.

innocent fig-tree: and yet, in both these, mercy rejoiced against judgment, and his goodness had the preheminance. For the first brought some smart with it indeed, but no harm at all, as fathers use to chastise their children by means that fear them, more than hurt them. The second of itself was nothing, as being practised on a creature dull and senseless of all smart and punishment; but was merely exemplary for us. Christ whips our fruitlessness in the innocent fig-tree*; like as the manner was among the Persians, when their great men had offended, to take their garments and beat them. Now that gracious way of goodness, which it pleased our Saviour thus to tread himself before us, the same hath he left behind him to be gone by us, and hath ordained us a course of religious and Christian service unto him, known by nothing more than goodness and compassion. The very Heathen themselves, though utter enemies unto it, have candidly afforded us this testimony. Ammianus Marcellinus taxing Georgius, a factious and proud bishop of Alexandria, for abusing the weakness of Constantius the Emperor, by base talebearing, and privy informations, notes precisely that he did it, 'quite besides the meaning of his profession, whose especial notes were gentleness and equity†.' And Tertullian tells us, that ancient-

* *Sterilitas nostra in ficu vapulat.*

† *Oblitus professionis suae, quae nil nisi justum suadet et lenae.* Lib. xxii. c. 11.

ly among the Heathen, the professors of Christianity were called, not *Christiani*, but *Chrestiani*, from a word signifying benignity and sweetness of disposition *. The learned of our times, who for our instruction have written *de Notis Ecclesiae*, by what notes and signs we may know the church of Christ, may seem to have but ill forgotten this, which the Heathen man had so clearly discovered. For what reason is there, why that should not be one of the chiefeft notes of the church of Christ, which did so especially characterize a Christian man, except it were the decay of it at this day in the church : of this thing therefore, so excellent in itself, so useful, so principally commended by the precept and example of our blessed Saviour, one especial part is, if not the whole, which here by our Apostle is commended unto us, when he speaks unto us of kindly intreating, and making much of such, who are, as he calls them, 'weak in the faith.' 'Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations.'

To know the natural ground and occasion of which words, it shall be very pertinent to note unto you, that with the church of Christ, as it signifies a company of men on earth, it fares no otherwise than it doth with other societies, and civil corporations. One thing there is unavoidable, and

* Cum perperam *Chrestianus* pronunciatur a vobis (nam nec nominis certa est notitia penes vos) de suavitate vel benignitate compositum est. *Apologet. adv. Gentes.*

natural to all societies, which is the greatest occasioner, yea, the very ground of disunion and dissent; I mean, inequality of persons and degrees. All are not of the same worth, and therefore all cannot carry the same esteem and countenance: yet all, even the meanest, are alike impatient of discountenance and contempt, be the persons never so great from whence it proceeds. Wherefore we find that in states governed by the people, nothing did more exasperate the common sort, than the conceit of being contemned by men of greater place. For the taking away therefore of tumult and combustion, which through this inequality might arise, it was antiently counted an excellent policy in the Roman state, that men of greater account and place did, as it were, share the inferior sort amongst themselves, and every one, according to his ability, entertained some part of them as clients, to whom they yielded all lawful favour and protection. Even thus it fares with the church of God, it cannot be that all in it should be of equal worth, it is likewise distinguished into *people* and *nobles*. Some there are, and those that either through abundance of spiritual graces, or else of natural gifts, do far outstrip a great part of other Christians; these are the nobles of the church, whom our Apostle somewhere calls 'strong men in Christ *.' Others there are, and those most in

* It is probable that the author here alludes to 1 Cor. iv. 10. where mention is made of 'wise in Christ.'

number, who either because God hath not so liberally blest them with gifts of understanding and capacity, or by reason of some other imperfections, are either not so deeply skilled in the mysteries of Christ, and of godliness, or otherwise weak in manners and behaviour; and these are the many of the church, whom our Apostle sometimes calls 'brethren of low degree †,' sometimes 'babes 'in Christ,' 1 Cor. iii. 1. and here in my text 'the 'weak and sick in faith.' Men by nature querulous, and apt to take exception; 'A sick man,' saith Electra in the tragedy, 'is a pettish and wayward creature, hard to be pleased ‡;' as therefore with the sick, so are we now to deal with a neighbour, weak and sick of his spiritual constitution, and much we are to bear with his frowardness, where we cannot remedy it. For, as Varro sometimes spake of the laws of wedlock, 'Either a 'man must amend, or endure the faults of his 'wife; he that amends them makes his wife the 'better, but he that patiently endures them makes 'himself the better §:' so is it much more true in dealing with our weak brethren, if we can by our behaviour remedy their imbecillities, we make them the better; if not, by enduring them we shall

† This passage is in St. James i. 9.

‡ *Δυσάρεστον οἱ νοσήσιν ἀπορίας ὑπὸ.* Eurip. Orest. v. 232.

§ Vitium uxoris aut tollendum aut ferendum est; qui tollit vitium, uxorem commodiorem præstat; qui fert, sese meliorem facit. A. Gell. lib. i. c. 17.

make ourselves the better; for so shall we increase the virtue of our patience, and purchase to ourselves, at God's hand, a more abundant reward. A great part of the lustre of a Christian man's virtue were utterly obscure, should it want this mean of shewing itself. For were all men strong, were all of sufficient discretion, to see and judge of convenience, where were the glory of our forbearance? As well therefore to increase the reward of the strong man in Christ, as to stop the whining and murmuring of the weaker sort, and to give content at all hands, our Apostle, like a good Tribune, in this text gives a rule of Christian popularity, advising the man of worthier parts, to avoid all slighting behaviour, to open the arms of tenderness and compassion, and to demerit by all courtesy the men of meaner rank, so to prevent all inconvenience that might arise out of disdainful and disrespectful carriage. For God is not like unto mortal princes, jealous of the man whom the people love; in the world, nothing is more dangerous for great men than the extraordinary favour and applause of the people; many excellent men have miscarried by it. For princes stand much in fear when any of their subjects hath the heart of the people. It is one of the commonest grounds upon which treason is raised; Absalom had the art of it, who by being plausible, by commiserating the peoples wrongs, and wishing their redress; 'O that I were a judge to do this people good!'

2 Sam. xv. 4. by putting out his hand, and embracing, and kissing every one that came nigh him; so stole away the hearts of the people, that he had well-nigh put his father besides his kingdom. But what alters and undoes the kingdoms of this world, *that* strengthens and increases the kingdom of God; Absalom, the popular Christian, that hath the art of winning men's souls and making himself beloved of the people, is the best subject in the kingdom of grace, for this is that which our Apostle expresses in the phrase of 'receiving the weak.'

Now it falls out oftentimes, that men offend through intempestive compassion and tenderness, as much as by over much rigidence and severity; as much by familiarity, as by superciliousness and contempt: wherefore even our love and courtesy must be managed by discretion. St. Paul saw this well, and therefore he prescribes limits to our affections; and having in the former part of my text counselled us, as Christ did St. Peter, to let loose our nets to make a draught; to do as Joseph did in Egypt, open our garners and store-houses, that all may come to buy, to admit of all, to exclude none from our indulgence and courtesy: in this second part, 'But not to doubtful disputations;' he set the bounds how far our love must reach. As Moses, in the xix. of Exodus, sets bounds about Mount Sinai, forbidding the people, that they go not up to the hill, or come within

the borders of it; so hath the Apostle appointed certain limits to our love and favour, within which it shall not be lawful for the people to come. Enlarge we the phylacteries of our goodness as broad as we list, give we all countenance unto the meaner sort, admit we them into all inwardness and familiarity; yet unto disputations and controversies, concerning profounder points of faith and religious mysteries, the meaner sort may be by no means admitted. For give me leave now to take this for the meaning of the words; I know they are very capable of another sense: as if the Apostle's counsel had been unto us, to entertain with all courtesy our weaker brethren, and not over-busily to enquire into, or censure their secret thoughts and doubtings, but here to leave them to themselves, and to God who is the judge of thoughts: for many there are, otherwise right good men, yet weak in judgment, who have fallen upon sundry private conceits, such as are unnecessary differencing of meats and drinks, distinction of days, or (to exemplify myself in some conceit of our times) some singular opinions concerning the state of souls departed, private interpretations of obscure texts of scripture, and others of the same nature: of these or the like thoughts, which have taken root in the hearts of men of shallow capacity, those who are more surely grounded may not presume themselves to be judges; many of these things of themselves are harmless and indifferent,

only to him that hath some prejudicate opinion of them, they are not so; and of these things, they who are thus or thus conceited, shall be accountable to God, and not to man, to him alone shall they stand or fall; wherefore, bear (saith the Apostle) with these infirmities, and take not on you to be lords of their thoughts, but gently tolerate these their unnecessary conceits and scrupulosities. This though I take to be the more natural meaning of the words, (for indeed it is the main drift of our Apostle's discourse in this chapter) yet chuse I rather to follow the former interpretation. First, because of the authority of fundry learned interpreters; and, secondly, because it is very requisite that our age should have something said unto it concerning this over-bold intrusion of all sorts of men into the discussing of doubtful disputations. For disputation, though it be an excellent help to bring the truth to light, yet many times, by too much troubling the waters, it suffers it to slip away unseen, especially with the meaner sort, who cannot so easily espy when it is mixed with sophistry and deceit. 'Him that is weak in the faith receive, but not to doubtful disputations.'

This my text therefore is a spiritual regimen and diet for these who are of a weak and sickly constitution of mind, and it contains a recipe for a man of crazy and diseased faith. In which, by that which I have delivered, you may plainly see there are two general parts. *First*, An admonition of

courteous entertainment to be given to the weaker fort, in the first words, 'Him that is weak in the faith receive.' *Secondly*, The restraint and bound of this admonition, how far it is to extend, even unto all Christian offices, excepting only the hearing of 'doubtful disputations.'

In the *first* part we will consider; *First*, who these weak ones are of whom the Apostle speaks, and how many kinds of them there be, and how each of them may be the subject of a Christian man's goodness and courtesy. *Secondly*, Who these persons are, to whom this precept of entertaining is given, and they are two; either the private man, or the public magistrate. In the second general part we will see what reasons we may frame to ourselves, why these weak ones should not be admitted to questions and doubtful disputations. Which points severally, and by themselves, we will not handle, but we will so order them, that still as we shall have in order discovered some kind of weak man, whom our Apostle would have received, we will immediately seek how far forth he hath a right to be an hearer of sacred disputation, and this as far only as it concerns a private man: and for an upshot in the end, we will briefly consider by itself, whether, and how far this precept of bearing with the weak pertains to the man of public place, whether in the church, or in the commonwealth.

And *first*, Concerning the weak, as he may be

a subject of Christian courtesy in private. And here, because that in comparison of him that is strong in Christ, every man, of what estate soever, may be said to be weak, that strong man only excepted, we will in the number of the weak contain all persons whatsoever. For I confess, because I wish well to all, I am willing that all should reap some benefit by my text. As therefore the woman in the gospel, who in touching only the hem of Christ's garment, did receive virtue to cure her disease; so all weak persons whatsoever, though they seem to come behind, and only touch the hem of my text, may peradventure receive some virtue from it to redress their weakness; nay, as the king in the gospel, that made a feast, and willed his servants to go out to the highways side, to the blind, and the lame, and force them in, that his house might be full: so what lame or weak person soever he be, if I find him not in my text, I will go out and force him in, that the doctrine of my text may be full, and that the goodness of a Christian man may be like the widow's oil, in the book of Kings, that never ceased running so long as there was a vessel to receive it. Wherefore to speak in general, there is no kind of man, of what life, of what profession, of what estate and calling soever, though he be an Heathen, and idolater, unto whom the skirts of Christian compassion do not reach. St. Paul is my author, 'Now whilst you have 'time' (saith he) 'do good unto all men, but e-

' specially to the household of faith.' Galat. ii. 4. The household of faith indeed hath the preheminence; it must be chiefly, but not alone respected. The distinction that is to be made, is not by excluding any, but not participating alike unto all. God did sometime indeed tie his love to the Jewish nation only, and gave his laws to them alone: but afterward he enlarged himself, and instituted an order of serving him promiscuously, capable of all the world. As therefore our religion is, so must our compassion be, catholic. To tie it either to persons, or to place, is but a kind of moral Judaism. Did not St. Paul teach us thus much, common reason would. There must of necessity be some free intercourse with all men, otherwise the passages of public commerce were quite cut off, and the common law of nations must needs fall. In some things we agree, as we are men, and thus far the very Heathen themselves are to be received. For the goodness of a man, which, in Solomon's judgment, extendeth even to a beast, much more must stretch itself to a man of the same nature with him, be his condition what it will. St. Paul loved the Jews, because they were ' his brethren according to the flesh;' Rom. ix. 3. We that are of the Heathen, by the same analogy, ought to be as tenderly affected to the rest of our brethren, who though they be not as we are now, yet now are that which we sometimes were. ' It is an easy thing,' saith St. Austin, ' to hate evil

‘ men, because they are evil; but to love them as
 ‘ they are men, this is a rare and a pious thing*.’
 The offices of common hospitality, of helping distressed persons, feeding the hungry, and the like, are due not only betwixt Christian and Christian, but between a Christian and all the world. Lot, when the angels came to Sodom, and sate in the streets; Abraham, when he saw three men coming toward him, stood not to enquire who they were, but out of the sense of common humanity, ran forth and met them, and gladly entertained them, not knowing whom they should receive. St. Chrysostom considering the circumstances of Abraham’s fact, that he sate at his tent door, and *that* in the heat of the day, that he came to meet them, thinks, he therefore sate in public, and endured the inconvenience of the heat, even for this purpose, that he might not let slip any occasion of being hospital. The writings of the fathers run much in commendation of the antient monks, and were they such as they report, well did they deserve to be commended; for their manner was to sit in the fields, and by the highway sides, for this end, that they might direct wandering passengers into the way, that they might relieve all that were distressed by want, or bruising or breaking of any member, and carry them home into their cells, and perform un-

* Facile est atque proclive, malos odisse quia mali sunt; rarum autem et pium eosdem ipsos diligere, quia homines sunt, Epist. cliii. §. 3.

to them all duties of humanity. This serves well to tax us, who affect a kind of intempestive prudence, and unseasonable discretion, in performing that little good we do, from whom so hardly, after long enquiry and entreaty, drops some small benevolence, like the sun in winter, long ere it rise, and quickly gone. How many occasions of Christian charity do we let slip, when we refuse to give our alms, unless we first cast doubts, and examine the persons, their lives, their necessities, though it be only to reach out some small thing, which is due unto him, whatsoever he be. It was antiently a complaint against the church, that the liberality of the Christians made many idle persons. Be it that it was so, yet no other thing befel them than what befalls their Lord, who knows and sees that his sun-shine and his rain is every day abused, and yet the sun becomes not like sackcloth, nor the heavens as brags; unto him must we, by his own command, be like: and whom then can we exclude, that have a pattern of such courtesy proposed to us to follow? We read in our books of a nice Athenian being entertained in a place by one given to hospitality, finding anon that another was received with the like courtesy, and then a third, growing very angry; I looked, said he, for a friend's house, but I am fallen into an inn to entertain all comers, rather than a lodging for some private and especial friends. Let it not offend any that I have made Christianity rather an inn to re-

ceive all, than a private house to receive some few. For so both the precepts and examples I have brought, teach us to extend our good, not to this or that man, but to mankind; like the sun that ariseth not on this or that nation, but on the whole world. Julian observes of the fig-tree, 'That above all trees it is most capable of grafts and scy-
' ons of other kinds, so far, as that all variety will
' be brought to take nourishment from one stock*.' Beloved, a Christian must be like unto Julian's fig-tree, so universally compassionate, that so all sorts of grafts, by a kind of Christian inoculation, may be brought to draw life and nourishment from his root.

But I am all this while in a generality only, and I must not forget, that I have many particular sick patients, in my text, of whom every one must have his recipe, and I must visit them all ere I go. But withal, I must remember my method, which was, still as I spake of receiving the weak, to speak likewise of excluding them from disputation. So must I needs, ere I pass away, tax this our age, for giving so general permission unto all, to busy themselves in doubtful cases of religion. For nothing is there that hath more prejudiced the cause of re-

* *Θιόφραστος* — πάντων, οἷμαι, τῶν φυτῶν μᾶλλον ἐπαινεῖ τῆς συκῆς τὸ δένδρον, ὡς ἂν τι ποικίλης ἔξ διαφόρων γενέσεως δεικνόν, ἢ μόνον τῶν ἄλλων εὐκόλον παντοῖον γένος ἐνιγκῆν βλάσσειν, ἢ τις αὐτῷ τῶν κλάδων ἐκτεμὼν ἑκαστον, ἕτα ἐκρίξας, ἄλλην ἐς ἄλλο τῶν πρίμων ἡμευῇ γονὴν ἐνερμόσειν. *Julian. epist. 24.*

ligion, than this promiscuous and careless admission of all sorts to the hearing and handling of controversies, whether we consider the private case of every man, or the public state of the church. I will touch but one inconvenience which much annoys the church, by opening this gate so wide to all comers; for by the great press of people that come, the work of the Lord is much hindered. Not to speak of those, who out of weakness of understanding fall into many errors, and by reason of liberty of bequeathing their errors to the world by writing, easily find heirs for them. There is a sort that do harm by being unnecessary, and though they sow not tares in the field, yet fill the Lord's floor with chaff: for what need this great breed of writers, with which in this age the world doth swarm? how many of us might spare the pains in committing our meditations to writing, contenting ourselves to teach the people *viva voce*, and suffering our conceits quietly to die in their birth? The teaching the people by voice is perpetually necessary, should all of us every where speak but the same things. For all cannot use books, and all that can, have not the leisure. To remedy therefore the want of skill in the one, and of time in the other, are we set in this ministry of preaching. Our voices are confined to a certain compass, and tied to the individuating properties of *here* and *now*: our writings are unlimited. Necessity therefore requires a multitude of speakers, a multitude

of writers not so. G. Agricola, writing *de animantibus subterraneis*, reports of a certain kind of spirits that converse in minerals, and much infest those that work in them; and the manner of them when they come, is, to seem to busy themselves according to all the customs of workmen; they will dig, and cleanse, and melt, and sever metals; yet when they are gone, the workmen do not find that there is any thing done†: so fares it with a great part of the multitude, who thrust themselves into the controversies of the times; they write books, move questions, frame distinctions, give solutions, and seem sedulously to do whatsoever the nature of the business requires; yet if any skilful workman in the Lord's mines shall come and examine their work, he shall find them to be but spirits in minerals, and that with all this labour and stir there is nothing done. I acknowledge it to be very true, which St. Austin spake; 'It is a thing
' very profitable, that divers tracts be written by
' divers men, after divers fashions, but according
' to the same analogy of faith, even of the same
' questions, that some might come into the hands
' of all, to some on this manner, to another after

† In subterraneorum animantium, seu, quod placet, theologis, substantiarum numero haberi possunt daemones, qui in quibusdam versantur fodinis—quum nihil agant, in omni laborum genere videntur se exercere: quasi modo fodiant venas, modo in vasa infundant id quod effossum est: modo versent machinam tractoriam. Agricola de animant. subterr. ad. fin.

‘that†.’ For this may we think to have been the counsel of the Holy Ghost himself, who may seem even for this purpose, to have registered the self-same things of Christ, by three of the Evangelists, with little difference. Yet notwithstanding, if this speech of St. Austin admit of being qualified, then was there no time which more than this age required should be moderated, which I note, because of a noxious conceit spread in our universities, to the great hindering of true proficiency in study, springing out from this root. For many of the learned themselves are fallen upon this preposterous conceit, That learning consisteth rather in variety of turning and quoting of sundry authors, than in soundly discovering and laying down the truth of things. Out of which arises a greater charge unto the poor student, who now goes by number rather than weight, and the books of the learned themselves, by ambitiously heaping up the conceits and authorities of other men, increase much in the bulk, but do as much imbase in true value. Wherefore as Gideon’s army of two and thirty thousand, by prescript from God, was brought unto three hundred; so this huge army of disputes might, without any hazard of the Lord’s battles, be well contracted into a smaller

† *Utile est plures libros à pluribus fieri diverso stilo, sed non diversa fide, etiam de quaestionibus iisdem, ut ad plurimos res ipsa perveniat ad alios sic, ad alios vero sic. De Trinitate lib. i.*

number. Justinian the Emperor, when he found that the study of the civil law was surcharged, and much confused, by reason of the great heaps of unnecessary writings, he calls an assembly of learned men, caused them to search the books, to cut off what was superfluous, to gather into order and method the sum and substance of the whole law: Were it possible that some religious Justinian might, after the same manner, employ the wits of some of the best learned in examining the controversies, and selecting out of the best writers what is necessary, defaulting unnecessary and partial discourses, and so digest into order and method, and leave for the direction of posterity, as it were, Theological Pandects, infinite store of our books might well lie by, and peaceably be buried, and after-ages reap greater profit with smaller cost and pains. But that which was possible in the world, united under Justinian, in this great division of kingdoms, is peradventure impossible. Wherefore having contented myself to shew what a great and irremediable inconvenience this free, and uncontrollable venturing upon theological disputes hath brought upon us, I will leave this project as a speculation, and pass from this general doctrine unto some particulars. For this generality, and heap of sick persons, I must divide into their kinds, and give every one his proper recipe.

The first in this order of weak persons, so to be received and cherished by us, is one of whom

question may be made, whether he may be called weak or no; he may seem to be rather dead: for no pulse of infused grace beats in him. I mean, such a one who hath but small, or peradventure no knowledge at all in the mystery of Christ, yet is, otherwise, a man of upright life and conversation, such a one as we usually name a moral man. Account you of such a one as dead, or how you please, yet methinks I find a recipe for him in my text. For this man is even to be woed by us; as sometimes one Heathen man wished of another, 'Being what thou art, would that thou wert ours*.' This man may speak unto a Christian, as Ruth does unto Boaz, 'Spread the skirt of thy garment over me, for thou art a near kinsman.' Ruth iii. 9. Two parts there are that do completely make up a Christian man, a true faith, and an honest conversation. The first, though it seem the worthier, and therefore gives unto us the name of Christians, yet the second, in the end, will prove the surer. For true profession, without honest conversation, not only saves not, but increases our weight of punishment: but a good life, without true profession, though it brings us not to heaven, yet it lessens the measure of our judgment: so that a moral man, so called, is a Christian by the surer side. As our Saviour saith of one in the gospel, that had wisely and discreetly

* Talis cum sis, utinam noster esses.

answered him, 'Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven;' Matth. xii. 34. so may we say of these men, Suppose that as yet they be not of, yet certainly far from the kingdom of heaven they cannot be. Yea, this sincerity of life, though severed from true profession, did seem such a jewel in the eyes of some of the antient fathers, that their opinion was, and so have they in their writings (erroneously doubtless) testified it, That God hath in store for such men not only this mitigating mercy, of which but now I spake, but even saving grace, so far forth as to make them possessors of his kingdom. Let it not trouble you, that I intitle them to some part of our Christian faith, and therefore without scruple to be received as weak, and not to be cast forth as dead. Salvianus disputing what faith is, 'What might this faith be?' (saith he) 'I suppose it is nothing else, but faithfully to believe Christ, and this is to be faithful unto God, which is nothing else but faithfully to keep the commandments of God †.' Not therefore only a bare belief, but the fidelity and trustiness of God's servants, faithfully accomplishing the will of our Master, is required as a part of our Christian faith. Now all those good things which moral men by the light of nature do, are a part of God's will written in their hearts; wherefore

† *Quid est igitur credulitas vel fides? opinor fideliter hominem Christo credere, id est, fidelem Deo esse, hoc est fideliter Dei mandata servare.*

so far as they were conscientious in performing them (if Salvianus his reason be good) so far have they title and interest in our faith. And therefore Regulus, that famous Roman, when he endured infinite torments, rather than he would break his oath, may thus far be counted a martyr, and witness for the truth. For the crown of martyrdom sits not only on the heads of those who have lost their lives, rather than they would cease to profess the name of Christ, but on the head of every one that suffers for the testimony of a good conscience, and for righteousness sake. And here I cannot pass by one very general gross mistaking of our age. For in our discourses concerning the notes of a Christian man, by what signs we may know a man to be one of the visible company of Christ, we have so tied ourselves to this outward profession, that if we know no other virtue in a man, but that he hath conned his creed by heart, let his life be never so profane, we think it argument enough for us to account him within the pale and circuit of the church: on the contrary side, let his life be never so upright, if either he be little seen in, or peradventure quite ignorant of the mystery of Christ, we esteem of him but as dead; and those who conceive well of those moral good things, as of some tokens giving hope of life, we account but as a kind of Manichees, who thought the very earth had life in it. I must confess that I have not yet made that proficiency in the schools

of our age, as that I could see, why the second table, and the acts of it, are not as properly the parts of religion and Christianity, as the acts and observations of the first. If I mistake, then it is St. James that hath abused me; for he describing religion by its proper acts, tells us, that ' True religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is, to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted of the world.' Jam. i. 27. So that the thing which in an especial refined dialect of the new Christian language signifies nothing but morality and civility, *that* in the language of the Holy Ghost imports true religion. Wherefore any difference that the Holy Ghost makes notwithstanding, the man of virtuous dispositions, though ignorant of the mystery of Christ, be it Fabricius, or Regulus, or any ancient Heathen man, famous for sincerity and uprightness of carriage, hath as sure a claim and interest in the church of Christ, as the man deepest skilled in, most certainly believing, and openly professing all that is written in the holy books of God, if he endeavour not to ' shew his faith by his works.' Jam. ii. 18. The antients therefore, where they found this kind of men, gladly received them, and conversed familiarly with them, as appears by the friendly intercourse of epistles of St. Basil with Libanius, of Nazianzen and Austin, with sundry others; and antiquity hath either left us true, or forged us false epistles betwixt St. Paul

himself and Seneca. Now as for the admitting of any of these men to the discussing of the doubts in our religious mysteries, who either know not, or peradventure condemn them, there needs not much be said: by a canon of one of the councils of Carthage it appears, it had sometimes been the erroneous practice of some Christians to baptize the dead, and to put the sacrament of Christ's body into their mouths *. Since we have confessed these men to be in a sort dead, as having no supernatural quickening grace from above, to put into their hands the handling of the word of life at all, much more of discussing of the doubtful things in it, were nothing else, but to baptize a carcase, and put the communion bread into the mouth of the dead. Wherefore leaving this kind of weak person to your courteous acceptance, let us consider of another, one quite contrary to the former; a true professor, but a man of profane and wicked life, one more dangerously ill than the former: have we any recipe for this man? May seem for him there is no balm in Gilead, he seems like unto the leper in the law, unto whom no man might draw near. And by so much the more dangerous is his case, because the condition of conversing with Heathen men, be they never so wicked, is permitted unto Christians by our Apostle himself, whereas with this man, all commerce seems, by the same Apostle, to be quite cut off. For in the

* Concil. Carthag. iii. can. 6. apud Harduin. vol. i. p. 961.

1 Cor. v. St. Paul having forbidden them formerly all manner of conversing with fornicators, infamous persons, and men subject to grievous crimes; and considering at length how impossible this was, because of the Gentiles with whom they lived, and amongst whom necessarily they were to converse and trade, he distinguishes between the fornicators of this world, and the fornicators which were brethren. I meant not (saith the blessed Apostle, expounding himself) 'that ye should not admit of 'the fornicators of this world;' 1 Cor. v. 10. that is, such as were Gentiles, for then must ye have sought a new world. So great and general a liberty at that time had the world assumed for the practice of that sin of fornication, that strictly to have forbidden them the company of fornicators, had almost been to have excluded them the society of mankind. But, saith he, 'If a brother 'be a fornicator, or a thief, or a railer; with such 'a one partake not, no not so much as to eat.' 1 Cor. v. 11. Wherefore the case of this person seems to be desperate; for he is not only mortally sick, but is bereft of all help of the physician. Yet notwithstanding all this, we may not give him over for gone; for when we have well searched our boxes, we shall find a recipe even for him too. Think we that our Apostle's meaning was, that we should acquaint ourselves only with the good, and not the bad; as physicians in the time of pestilence look only to the sound, and shun the dis-

ceased? Our Saviour Christ familiarly conversed, eat, and drank with publicans and sinners, and gives the reason of it, because he 'came not to call the 'righteous, but sinners to repentance.' Matth. ix. 13. Is Christ contrary to Paul? This reason of our Saviour concerns every one on whom the duty of saving of souls doth rest. It is the main drift of his message, and unavoidably he is to converse, yea, eat and drink with all sorts of sinners, even because he is to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Necessary it is that some means be left to reclaim notorious offenders, let their disease be never so dangerous.

'I know not whether ought that can be tried, in the extremity of danger, will prove salutary; certainly to try nothing, must be destructive*.'

Who can tell whether in this extremity, were it at the last cast, it may some way profit to receive him; but this we all know, that altogether to cast him out of the society of good men, is to cut him off from all outward means of health. The leper in the law, though he were excluded the multitude, yet had he access unto the priest. Beloved, the priest in the new law hath much greater privilege than the antient had; he was only a judge, and could not cure; but this is both a judge and a physician, and can both discern and cure the leprosy of our souls; wherefore he is not to be exclud-

* Nescio an in extremis aliquid tentare medicina sit, certe nihil tentare perditio est.

ed from the most desperately sick person. Neither doth this duty concern the priest alone; for, as Tertullian sometimes spake in another case, 'Against traitors and public enemies every man is a soldier *;' so is it true in this. Every one who is of strength to pull a soul out of the fire, is for this business, by counsel, by advice, by rebuking, a priest, neither must he let him lie there to expect better help. Again, no man so ill, but hath some good thing in him, though it breaks not out, as being clouded and darkened with much corruption. We must take heed, that we do not mistake in thinking there is nothing else but evil, where we often see it. We must therefore entertain even near friendship with such a one to discover him. 'No man is perfectly discovered,' saith St. Austin, 'but by his inward acquaintance†.' As therefore they who seek for treasure, give not over by reason of clay and mire, so long as there is any hope to speed; so may we not cast off our industry, though it labour in the most polluted soul; that so at length, through charitable patience and long-suffering, we may discover in him some good things which may content us for the present, and give hope of better things to come ‡.' For as they that work in

* In majestatis reos et publicos hostes omnis homo miles est. Apolog. c. 2.

† Nemo enim nisi per amicitiam cognoscitur.

‡ Ut ad quaedam sana in quorum delectatione acquiescamus per charitatis tolerantiam perducamur.

gold and costly matter, diligently save every little piece that falls away; so goodness, wheresoever it be, is a thing so precious, that every little spark of it deserves our care in cherishing. Many miscarry through the want of this patience in those who undertake them, whilst they despair of them too soon: Whilst they rebuke us, as if they hated, and upbraid rather than reprehend*. As unskilful physicians, who suffer their patients to die under their hands, to hide their error, blame their patients intemperance†: so let us take heed, lest it be not so much the strength of the disease, as the want of skill in us, which we strive to cover and veil over with the names of contumacy, intemperance, or the like. David received an express message from the prophet, that the child conceived in adultery should surely die; yet he ceased not his prayers, and tears, and fasting, as long as there was life in it. We receive no such certain message concerning any man's miscarriage, and why then should we intermit any office which Christian patience can afford? Wherefore, what Maecenas sometime spake loosely in another sense, that we may apply more properly to our purpose, Let our weak person here be lame, hand and foot, hip and thigh, sick in head and heart; yet so long

* Dum ita objurgant quasi oderint.

† Transit convitium et intemperantia culpatur, uterque qui periere arguuntur.

as there is life in him, there is no cause we should despair ‡. How knowest thou how potent the word of God may be through thy ministry, 'out of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham?' Luke iii. 8. I cannot therefore persuade myself, that this prohibition of St. Paul, of which we but now spake, so far extended, as that it quite interdicted good men the company of the sinners, be they never so gross. For when he delivered men unto Satan, (the greatest thing that ever he did in this kind) it was, 'to the mortifying of the flesh, that so the spirit might be safe in the day of the Lord.' 1 Cor. v. 5. But this is worse, for by this peremptory excluding the gross sinner from the good, a greater gap is opened to the liberty of the flesh, and a more immediate way could not be found to bring final destruction on him at that day. The extent therefore of St. Paul's precept, though given in shew to all, I take to reach no farther than the weak, and such as are in danger

‡ Inde illud Mecaenatis turpissimum votum, quo et debilitatem non recusat, et deformitatem, et novissimè acutam crucem, dummodo inter haec mala spiritus prorogetur.

Debilem facito manu,

Debilem pede, coxa:

Tuber adstrue gibberum,

Lubricos quate dentes.

Vita dum superest, bene est.

Hanc mihi vel acutâ

Si sedeam cruce, sustine.

Senecae epistol. 101.

of infection; for the weaker sort of men are always evermore the most, and a charge given unto the most, is commonly given under the stile of all. Our Apostle therefore jealous of the tenderer sort, whom every unwholsome blast doth easily taint, seems, what he intended for the most, to make general to all. The reason which the Apostle gives does warrant this restraint; 'See ye not,' saith he, 'that a little leaven sours the whole lump?' 1 Cor. v. 6. If therefore there be any part of the lump out of shot and danger of souring and contagion, on it this precept can have no extent: and surely some wrong it were to the church of Christ, to suppose that all were necessarily subject to souring and infection, upon supposal of some admission of leaven. Evil indeed is infectious, but neither necessarily, nor yet so, that it need fright us from those who are diseased with it. Contagious diseases which seize on our bodies, infect by natural force and means, which we cannot prevent: but no man drinks down this poison, whose will is not the hand that takes the cup: so that to converse with men of diseased minds, infects us not, except we will. Again, Aristotle, in his problems, makes a question, 'Why health doth not infect as well as sickness.' For we grow sick many times by incautelously conversing with the diseased, but no man grows well by accompanying the healthy. Thus indeed it is with the healthiness of the body; it hath no transient force on others. But the

strength and healthiness of the mind carries with it a gracious kind of infection: and common experience tells us, that nothing profits evil men more than the company of the good. So that strength of mind, accompanied with the preservative of the grace of God, may not only, without fear of contagion, safely converse with ungracious sinners, but by so doing, as it were infect them, and make them such as himself is. No cause therefore hitherto, why the true professors, though notorious sinners, should not be partakers of our Christian courtesies. And therefore as of the former, so of this my conclusion is, we must receive him. Only let me add St. Paul's words in another place, 'Ye that are strong receive such a one *.'

Having thus far spoken of his admission, let us now a little consider of his restraint, and see whether he may have any part in hearing and handling religious controversies; where plainly to speak my mind, as his admission before was, so his exclusion here is much more necessary: the way to these schools should be open to none, but to men of upright life and conversation: and *that* as well in regard of the profane and wicked men themselves, as of the cause which they presume to handle: for as for themselves, this is but the field wherein they sow and reap their own infamy and disgrace. Our own experience tells us, how hard a thing it

* This seems an allusion, from memory, to Rom. xv. 1.

is for men of behaviour known to be spotless, to avoid the lash of those men's tongues, who make it their chief fence to disgrace the persons, when they cannot touch the cause. For what else are the writings of many men but mutual pasquils and satires against each others lives, wherein digladiating like Eschines and Demosthenes, they reciprocally lay open each others filthiness to the view and scorn of the world. The fear therefore of being stained, and publicly disgraced, might be reason enough to keep them back from entering these contentions. And as for the cause itself, into which this kind of men do put themselves, needs must it go but ill with it: for is it possible that those respects, which sway and govern their ordinary actions, should have no influence upon their pens? It cannot be, that they who speak, and plot, and act wickedness, should ever write uprightly. Doubtless, as in their lives, so in the causes they undertake, they nourish hopes full of improbity*. Besides all this, the opinion of the common sort is not to be contemned, whom no kind of reason so much abuses, and carries away, as when the discredit of the person is retorted on the cause; which thing our adversaries here at home amongst us know very well, a master-piece of whose policy it is, to put into the hands of the people such pamphlets which hurt not our cause at all, but only

* Sicut in vita, ita in causis quoque spes improbas habent.
Quintil. inst. orat. lib. xii. c. 1.

discredit our persons. St. Chrysostom observes out of the antient customs of the Olympic Games, that whensoever any man offered himself to contend in them, he was not to be admitted till public proclamation had been made throughout the multitude to this purpose. Whether any man knew him to be either a servant, or a thief, or otherwise of infamous life. And if any imputation in this kind were proved against him, it was sufficient to keep him back *. Had the Heathen this care that their vanities should not be discredited? how great then must our care be, that they which enter into these exercises be of pure and upright condition? Let men's skill and judgment therefore be never so good, yet if their lives be notoriously subject to exception, let them know, that there is no place for them in these Olympics. Men indeed, in civil business, have found out a distinction, between an honest man, and a good commonwealths-man: and therefore Fabricius, in the Roman story, is much commended, for nominating to the consulship Ruffinus, a wicked man, and his utter enemy, because he knew him to be serviceable to the commonwealth, for those wars which were then depending. But in the business of the Lord, and commonwealth of God, we can admit

* Οἱ γὰρ μέλλοντες εἰς τὸ διατρεῖν ἵλκεσθαι ἑκάνα, ἢ πρότερον καθίσαιεν εἰς τὴν ἀγῶναν, ὥς ἂν αὐτὸς ὁ κήρυξ λαβὼν ὑπὸ τοῖς ἀπάντων ὀφθαλμοῖς περιπαύῃ βῶν ἃ λέγων, ΜΗ' ΤΙ'Σ τότε κατήγορον. *Ad Illuminandos Catechesis. ii.*

of no such distinction. For God himself, in the book of Psalms, staves them off with a 'What hast thou to do to take my words into thy mouth, 'since thou hatest to be reformed?' Ps. l. 17. The world, for the managing of her matters, may employ such as herself hath fitted: 'But let every one who names the name of God, depart from 'iniquity.' 2 Tim. ii. 19. For these reasons therefore it is very expedient, that none but right good men should undertake the Lord's quarrels, the rather, because there is some truth in that which Quintilian spake, 'As impossible it is that 'good and bad thoughts should harbour in the 'same heart, as it is for the same man to be jointly good and bad *.' And so, from the consideration of this sick person, let us proceed to visit the next.

The weak persons, I have hitherto treated of, are the fewest, as consisting in a kind of extreme. For the greatest sort of men are in a mediocrity; of men, eminently good, or extremely ill, the number is smallest; but this rank of sick persons, that now we are to view, is an whole army, and may be, every one of us, if we do well examine ourselves, shall find ourselves in it: for the weak, whom we now are to speak of, is he that hath not that degree and perfection of faith, and strength of spi-

* Cogitare optima simul ac deterrima, non magis est unus animi, quam ejusdem hominis bonum esse ac malum. Inst. Orat. lib. xii. c. 1.

ritual constitution, that he ought to have. Wherefore our recipe here must be like the tree of life in the book of the Revelation, it must be medicine to heal whole nations. For who is he amongst men that can free himself from this weakness? Yea, we ourselves, that are set over others for their cure, may speak of ourselves and our charge, as Iolaus, in Euripides, doth of himself and Hercules's children, 'We take care of these, ourselves 'standing in need of others care for us*.' Hippocrates counsels his physician, to look especially that himself be healthy, 'fair of colour, and full 'of flesh †.' For otherwise, saith he, how can he give comfort and hope of success to a sick patient, who, by his ill colour and meagreness, bewrays some imperfection of his own. But what physician of soul and manners is capable of this counsel? or who is it, that, taking the cure of others, doth not in most of his actions bewray his own disease? Even thus hath it pleased God to tie us together with a mutual sense of each others weakness; and as ourselves receive and bear with others; so for ourselves interchangeably must we request the same courtesy at others hands. Notwithstanding, as it is with the health of our bo-

* Σώω τὰ δ' αὐτὸς δέσμενος σωτηρίας. Eurip. Heracl. v. 11.

† Ἰντρο μὲν εἶναι προσασίν, ὅρην "ΕΥΧΡΩΣ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ "ΕΥ-
ΣΑΡΚΟΣ "ΕΣΤΑΙ πρὸς τὴν ὑπέρχουσαν αὐτῷ φύσιν, ἀξιοῦνται γὰρ
ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν οἱ μὴ εὖ διακείμενον τὸ σῶμα ὕτως, ὥς ὅδ' ἂν ἐτί-
μων ἐπιμιλεῖσθαι καλῶς. Hippocr. de Medico. c. 1.

dies, no man at any time is perfectly well, only he goes for an healthy man, who is least sick: so fares it with our souls. God hath included all under the name of weak, some peradventure are less weak than others, but no man is strong. It is but a miserable comfort to judge our own perfections only by others defects, yet this is all the comfort we have *.

Let us leave therefore those, who, by reason of being less crazy, pass for healthy, and consider of those whom some sensible and eminent imperfection above others hath ranked in the number of the weak. And of those there are sundry kinds, especially two. One is weak, because he is not yet fully informed, not so sufficiently catechized in the mysteries of faith, whom farther institution may bring to better maturity: The other peradventure is sufficiently grounded for principles of faith, yet is weak, by reason either of some passion, or of some irritatory and troublesome humour in his behaviour. There is no man so perfect, but hath somewhat in his behaviour that requireth pardon †.

As for the imperfection of the former of these, it is the weakness of infancy and childhood in faith, rather than a disease: and with this weak man we are especially to bear above all others. For as for him that is weak through gross and wilful igno-

* Infelicissimum consolationis genus est de miseriis hominum peccatorum capere solatia.

† Nullum unquam ingenium placuit sine venia.

rance, or contumacy, or the like, it is pardonable, if sometimes we yield him not that measure of courtesy which were meet; but to be cruel against infancy and childhood were inhumanity. The manner of our recipe for these men, our Apostle somewhere expresses, where he tells us of some that must 'be fed with milk, and not strong meat:' 1 Cor. iii. 2. unto these we must rather be as nurses than physicians; by gently submitting ourselves to the capacity of the learner, by lending our hand, by lessening our steps to keep them in equi-pace with us, till they come up to their full growth*. As Christ, being God, emptied himself, and became man like to us, so must we lay down our gifts of wit, in which we flatter ourselves, and take ourselves to be as gods, and in shew and fashion become like one of them. Grave men have thought it no disparagement to have been seen with their little sons, toying and practising with them their childish sports†: and if any take offence at it, they are such as know not what it is to be fathers. Those therefore who bear the office of fathers amongst other men, to bring up the infancy of babes in Christ, must not blush to practise this part of a father, and out of St. Paul's lesson of 'becoming all to all,' 1 Cor. iv. 22. learn to become a child to children; do it

* Submittendum nos ad mensuram discantis, et manum dando et gradum nostrum minuendo.

† Ludere par impar, equitare in arundine longa. Horat.

he may very well, without any impeachment to himself. He that helps one up that is fallen, throws not himself down to lie by him, but gently stoops to lift him up again*; but of this weak person I have little need, I trust, to speak. For no man in these days can be long weak, but by his own default, so long and careful teaching as hath been, and every day is, must needs take from men all pretence of weakness in this kind: for what is the end of all this labour and pains in teaching, but that ye might at length not need a teacher†. Wherefore from this I come unto that other weak person, strong in faith, but weak in carriage and behaviour.

Having before proved, that Christian courtesy spreads itself to all sorts of men, to the infidel, to the gross notorious sinner, then will it, without any straining at all, come home to all the infirmities of our weaker brethren: for that which can endure so great a tempest, how can it be offended with some small drops. Is Christian patience like unto St. Peter's resolution, that durst manfully encounter the high priest's servant, yet was daunted at the voice of a silly maiden; whatsoever it is that is irksome unto us in the common behaviour of our brethren, it were strange we should not be

* Non se projicit, ut ambo jaceant; sed incurvat tantum, ut jacentem erigat.

† Nam quid aliud agimus docendo vos, quam ne semper docendi sitis.

able to brook. Epictetus considering with himself the weakness which is usual in men, still to make the worst of what befalls us, wittily tells us, that every thing in the world hath two handles, one turned toward us, which we may easily take, the other turned from us, harder to be laid hold of; the first makes all things easy, the second not so; the instance that he brings is my very purpose; 'Be it,' saith he, 'thy brother hath offended thee, here are two hand-fasts, one of the offence, the other of thy brother. If thou take hold of that of the offence, it will be too hot for thee, thou wilt not easily endure the touch of it: but if thou lay hold of that of thy brother, this will make all behaviour tolerable. There is no part of our brother's carriage towards us, but if we search it, we shall find, some hand-fast, some circumstance, that will make it easy to be born *.' If we can find no other, the circumstance of our Saviour Christ's example will never fail: an example which will not only make us to endure the importunity of his ordinary behaviour, but all his outrageous dealing whatsoever. For, saith St. Chrysostom, 'Didst thou know that thy brother intended particular mischief against thee, that he would embrace his hand in thy blood, yet kiss that hand; for thy Lord did not refuse to kiss that mouth that made the bargain

* A paraphrase of Epictet. Enchir. c. 39.

* for his blood*.' It is storied of Protagoras, that being a poor youth, and carrying a burthen of sticks, he so piled them, and laid them together with such art and order, that he made them much more light and easy to be born. Beloved, there is an art among Christians, like unto that of Protagoras, of so making up and ordering our burthens, that they may lie with much less weight upon our shoulders; this art, if we could learn it, would make us take all in good part at our brother's hand, were he as bad as Nabal was, of whom his own servant complained, that he was 'such a 'man of Belial, that no man could speak unto him.' 1 Sam. xxv. 17.

Wherefore, leaving you to the study and learning of this most Christian art, I will a little consider for what reasons we may not admit of these two sorts of weak men to controversy. For first, as for the unlearned, in private, nothing more usual with them than to take offence at our dissensions, and to become more uncertain and unjoined upon the hearing of any question discuss: it is their usual voice and question to us, Is it possible that we should be at one in these points in which yourselves do disagree? thus cast they off on our backs the burthen of their back-sliding and neutrality; wherefore to acquaint them with disputation in religion, were, as it were, to blast them in their

* Αὐτὴν φίλησον τὴν διζίαν.

infancy, and bring upon them some improsperous disease to hinder their growth in Christ.

Secondly, What one said of other contentions, 'In civil wars no man is too weak to do a mischief*,' we have found too true in these our holy wars; no man is too weak (I say not) to do mischief, but to be a principal agent and captain in them. Simple and unlearned souls, trained up by men of contentious spirits, have had strength enough to be authors of dangerous heresies; Priscilla and Maximilla, silly women laden with iniquity, were the chief ring-leaders in the errors of the Montanists; and as it is commonly said, 'Weaklings are able to begin a quarrel, but the prosecution and finishing is a work for stronger men†;' so hath it fared here. For that quarrel which these poor souls had raised, Tertullian, a man of great wit and learning, is drawn to undertake: so that for a Barnabas to be drawn away to error, there needs not always the example and authority of a Peter.

A third reason is the marvellous violence of the weaker sort in maintaining their conceits, if once they begin to be opinionative. For one thing there is that wonderfully prevails against the reclaiming of them, and that is, The natural jealousy they have of all that is said unto them by men of better wits, stand it with reason never so good, if it

* In bellis civilibus audacia etiam valet singulorum.

† Bellum inchoant inertes, fortes finiunt.

found not as they would have it. A jealousy founded in the sense of their weakness, arising out of this, that they suspect all to be done for no other end, but to circumvent and abuse them. And therefore when they see themselves to be too weak in reasoning, they easily turn them to violence. The monks of Egypt, otherwise devout and religious men, antiently were for the most part unlearned, and generally given over to the error of the Anthropomorphitae, who held, that God had hands and feet, and all the parts that a man hath, and was in outward shape and proportion like to one of us. Theophilus, a learned bishop of Alexandria, having fallen into their hands, was so roughly used by them, that ere he could get out of their fingers, he was fain to use his wits, and to crave aid of his equivocating sophistry, and soothly to tell them, 'I have seen your face as the face of God.' Now when Christian and religious doubts must thus be managed with wilfulness and violence, what mischief may come of it is already so plain, that it needs not my finger to point it out. Wherefore let every such weak person say unto himself, as St. Austin doth, 'Let others reason, I will marvel; let others dispute, I will believe*.'

As for the man strong in passion, or rather weak, for the strength of passion is the weakness of the passionate; great reason hath the church to

* Tu ratiocinare, ego mirer; disputa tu, ego credam.

except against him. For first of all, from him it comes, that our books are so stuf't with contumelious malediction, no Heathen writers having left the like example of choler and gross impatience. An hard thing I know it is, to write without affection and passion in those things which we love, and therefore it is free so to do, to those who are lords over themselves. It seems our Saviour gave some way to it himself. For somewhat certainly his kinsmen saw in his behaviour, when, as St. Mark reports, they went forth to lay hold upon him, 'thinking he was beside himself.' Mark iii. 21. But for those who have not the command of themselves, better it were they laid it by; St. Chrysostom excellently observeth, that the prophets of God, and Satan, were by this notoriously differenced, that they which gave oracles by motion from the devil, did it with much impatience and confusion, with a kind of fury and madness; but they which gave oracles from God by divine inspiration, gave them with all mildness and temper; if it be the cause of God which we handle in our writings, then let us handle it like the prophets of God, with quietness and moderation, and not in the violence of passion, as if we were possessed, rather than inspired. Again, what equity or indifferency can we look for in the carriage of that cause, that falls into the handling of these men: What man, overtaken with passion, remembers impartially to compare cause with cause,

and right with right; on what cause he happens, that is he resolute to maintain*; as a fencer to the stage, so comes he to write, not upon conscience of quarrel, but because he proposes to contend; yea, so potently hath this humour prevailed with men that have undertaken to maintain a faction, that it hath broken out to the tempting of God, and the dishonour of martyrdom. Two friers in Florence, in the action of Savonarola, voluntarily, in the open view of the city, offered to enter the fire: so to put an end to the controversy, that he might be judged to have the right, who, like one of the three children in Babylon, should pass untouched through the fire†. But I hasten to visit one weak person more, and so an end.

He whom we now are to visit, is a man weak through heretical and erring faith; now whether or no we have any receipt for him, it may be doubtful: for St. Paul advises us to avoid the man that is a maker of sects, knowing him to be damned‡. Yet, if as we spake of not admitting to us the notorious sinner, no not to eat, so we teach of this, that it is delivered respectively to the weaker sort, as justly for the same reasons we may

* *Quis conferre duces meminit, qui pendere causas?*

Qua stetit inde favet.

† See Burchardi Diar. in the appendix to Gordon's life of Pope Alexander VI. where the tenor of this extraordinary challenge is recorded.

‡ *Alluding to Tit. iii. 10, 11.*

do: we shall have a recipe here for the man that errs in faith, and rejoiceth in making of sects: which we shall the better do, if we can but gently draw him on to a moderation to think of his conceits only as of opinions; for it is not the variety of opinions, but our own perverse wills, who think it meet, that all should be conceited as ourselves are, which hath so inconvenienced the church. Were we not so ready to anathematize each other, where we concur not in opinion, we might in hearts be united, though in our tongues we were divided, and that with singular profit to all sides. It is 'the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,' Ephes. iv. 3. and not identity of conceit, which the Holy Ghost requires at the hands of Christians. I will give you one instance, in which, at this day, our churches are at variance; the will of God, and his manner of proceeding in predestination, is undiscernible, and shall so remain until that day, wherein all knowledge shall be made perfect; yet some there are, who, with probability of scripture, teach, that the true cause of the final miscarriage of them that perish, is that original corruption that beset them at the beginning, increased though the neglect or refusal of grace offered. Others, with no less favourable countenance of scripture, make the cause of reprobation only the will of God, determining freely of his own work, as himself pleases, without respect to any second cause whatsoever. Were we not ambitiously mind-

ed, every one to be lord of a sect, each of these tenets might be profitably taught and heard, and matter of singular exhortation drawn from either; for on the one part, doubtless it is a pious and religious intent, to endeavour to free God from all imputation of unnecessary rigour, and his justice from seeming injustice and incongruity: and on the other side, it is a noble resolution, so to humble ourselves under the hand of Almighty God, as that we can with patience hear, yea, think it an honour, that so base creatures as ourselves should become the instruments of the glory of so great a Majesty, whether it be by eternal life, or by eternal death, though for no other reason but for God's good will and pleasure's sake. The authors of these conceits might both freely (if peaceably) speak their minds, and both singularly profit the church: for since it is impossible, where scripture is ambiguous, that all conceits should run alike, it remains, that we seek out a way, not so much to establish an unity of opinion in the minds of all, which I take to be a thing likewise impossible, as to provide, that multiplicity of conceit trouble not the church's peace. A better way my conceit cannot reach unto, than that we would be willing to think, that these things, which with some shew of probability we deduce from scripture, are at the best but our opinions: for this peremptory manner of setting down our own conclusions, under this high commanding form of necessary truths, is ge-

nerally one of the greatest causes, which keeps the churches this day so far asunder; when as a gracious receiving of each other, by mutual forbearance in this kind, might peradventure, in time, bring them nearer together.

This peradventure, may some man say, may content us in case of opinion indifferent, out of which no great inconvenience, by necessary and evident proof, is concluded: but what recipe have we for him that is fallen into some known and desperate heresy? Even the same with the former. And therefore antiently, heretical and orthodox Christians, many times, even in public holy exercise, convert together without offence. It is noted in the ecclesiastick stories, that the Arrians and right believers so communicated together in holy prayers, that you could not distinguish them till they came to the Doxology, which the Arrians used with some difference from other Christians. But those were times of which we read in our books, but we have lost the practice of their patience*. Some prejudice was done unto the church by those, who first began to intermingle with public ecclesiastical duties, things respective unto private conceits. For those Christian offices in the church ought, as much as possibly they may, be common unto all, and not to descend to the differences of particular opinions. Severity a-

* Quorum lectionem habemus, virtutem non habemus.

gainst, and separation from heretical companies, took its beginning from the heretics themselves: and if we search the stories, we shall find, that the church did not, at their first arising, thrust them from her, themselves went out: and as for severity, that which the Donatists sometimes spake in their own defence; 'She was the true church, not 'which raised, but which suffered persecution *,' was *de facto* true for a great space. For when heresies and schisms first arose in the church, all kinds of violence were used by the erring factions; but the church seemed not for a long time to have known any use of a sword, but only of a buckler, and when she began to use the sword, some of her best and chiefest captains much disliked it. The first law in this kind that ever was made, was enacted by Theodosius against the Donatists, but with this restraint, that it should extend against none, but only such as were tumultuous, and till that time they were not so much as touched with any mulct, though but pecuniary, till that shameful outrage committed against Bishop Maximian, whom they beat down with bats and clubs, even as he stood at the altar: so that not so much the error of the Donatists, as their riots and mutinies were by imperial laws restrained. That the church had afterward good reason to think, that she ought to be rather salutary than pleasing; that

* Illam esse veram ecclesiam quae persecutionem patitur, non quae facit.

sometimes there was more mercy in punishing than forbearing, there can no doubt be made. St. Austin (a man of as mild and gentle spirit as ever bore rule in the church) having, according to his natural sweetness of disposition, earnestly written against violent and sharp dealing with heretics, being taught by experience, did afterward retract, and confess an excellent use of wholesome severity in the church. Yet could I wish that it might be said of the church, which was sometimes observed of Augustus, 'He had been angry with, and severely punished many of his kin, but he could never endure to cut any of them off by death*.' But this I must request you to take only as my private wish, and not as a censure, if any thing have been done to the contrary. When Absalom was up in arms against his father, it was necessary for David to take order to curb him, and pull him on his knees; yet we see how careful he was he should not die, and how lamentably he bewailed him in his death: what cause was it that drove David into this extreme passion? Was it doubt of heir to the kingdom? that could not be; for Solomon was now born, to whom the promise of the kingdom was made: Was it the strength of natural affection? I somewhat doubt of it; three years together was Absalom in banishment, and David did not very eagerly desire to see him: the scrip-

* In nullius unquam suorum necem duravit. Tacit. Annal. i. 6.

ture indeed notes, that the king longed for him; yet in this longing was there not any such fierceness of passion, for Absalom saw not the king's face for two years more after his return from banishment to Jerusalem: What then might be the cause of his strength of passion, and commiseration in the king? I persuade myself it was the fear of his son's final miscarriage, and reprobation, which made the king (secure of the mercies of God unto himself) to wish he had died in his stead, that so he might have gained for his ungracious child some time of repentance. The church, who is the common mother of us all, when her Absaloms, her unnatural sons, do lift up their hands and pens against her, must so use means to repress them, that she forget not that they are the sons of her womb; and be compassionate over them, as David was over Absalom, loth to unsheath either sword, but most of all the temporal; for this were to send them quick dispatch to hell.

And here I may not pass by that singular moderation of this church of ours, which she hath most Christianly expressed towards her adversaries of Rome, here at home in her bosom, above all the reformed churches I have read of. For out of desire to make the breach seem no greater than indeed it is, and to hold communion and Christian fellowship with her, so far as we possibly can, we have done nothing to cut off the favourers of that church. The reasons of their love and respect to the church of

Rome we wish, but we do not command, them to lay down : their lay-brethren have all means of instruction offered them. Our edicts and statutes, made for their restraint, are such as serve only to awaken them, and cause them to consider the innocency of that cause, for the refusal of communion in which they endure (as they suppose) so great losses. Those who are sent over by them, either for the retaining of the already perverted, or perverting others, are either returned by us back again to them, who dispatched them to us; or, without any wrong unto their persons, or danger to their lives, suffer an easy restraint; which only hinders them from dispersing the poison they brought. And had they not been stickling in our state business, and meddling with our prince's crown, there had not a drop of their blood fallen to the ground; unto our sermons, in which the swerings of that church are necessarily to be taxt by us, we do not bind their presence; only our desire is, they would join with us in those prayers and holy ceremonies, which are common to them and us. And so accordingly, by singular discretion was our Service-book compiled by our fore-fathers, as containing nothing that might offend them, as being almost merely a compendium of their own Breviary and Missal; so that they shall see nothing in our meetings, but that they shall see done in their own; though many things which are in theirs, here, I grant, they shall not find. And here in-

deed is the great and main difference betwixt us. As it is in the controversy concerning the canonical books of scripture: whatsoever we hold for scripture, that even by that church is maintained, only she takes upon her to add much, which we cannot think safe to admit: so fares it in other points of faith and ceremony; whatsoever it is we hold for faith, she holds it as far forth as we: our ceremonies are taken from her; only she, over and above, urges some things for faith, which we take to be error, or at the best but opinion; and for ceremony, which we think to be superstition: so that to participate with us, is, though not throughout, yet in some good measure, to participate with that church; and certainly were that spirit of charity stirring in them, which ought to be, they would love and honour us, even for the resemblance of that church, the beauty of which themselves so much admire. The glory of these our proceedings; even our adversaries themselves do much envy; so that from hence it is, that in their writings they traduce our judiciary proceedings against them, for sanguinary and violent; striving to persuade other nations, that such as have suffered by course of public justice for religion only, and not for treason have died, and pretend we what we list, our actions are as bloody and cruel as their own: wherefore if a perfect pattern of dealing with erring Christians were to be sought, there were not any like unto this of ours; which, as it

takes not to itself liberty of cruelty, so it leaves not unto any the liberty of destroying their own souls in the error of their lives *. And now that we may at once conclude this point concerning heretics, for prohibiting these men access to religious disputations, it is now too late to dispute of that; for from this, that they have already unadvisedly entered into these battles, are they become that which they are: let us leave them therefore as a sufficient example and instance of the danger of intempestive and immodest meddling in sacred disputes.

I see it may be well expected, that I should, according to my promise, add instruction for the public magistrate, and show how far this precept in receiving the weak concerns him.

I must confess I intended, and promised so to do, but I cannot conceive of it, as a thing befitting me to step out of my study, and give rules for government to commonwealths, a thing befitting men of greater experience to do. Wherefore I hope you will pardon me if I keep not that promise, which I shall with less offence break than observe: and this I rather do, because I suppose this precept to concern us especially, if not only, as private men, and that in case of public proceeding, there is scarce room for it. Private men may pass over offences at their pleasure, and may be, in not

* In qua nec saevienti, nec errandi pereundique licentia permittitur.

doing it, they do worse; but thus to do, lies not in the power of the magistrate, who goes by laws, prescribing him what he is to do. Princes and men in authority do many times much abuse themselves, by affecting a reputation of clemency, in pardoning wrongs done to other men, and giving protection to sundry offenders, against those who have just cause to proceed against them. It is mercy to pardon wrong done against ourselves, but to deny the course of justice to him that calls for it, and to protect offenders, may peradventure be some inconsiderate pity, but mercy it cannot be. All therefore that I will presume to advise the magistrate is, a general inclinableness to merciful proceedings.

And so I conclude, wishing unto them who plentifully sow mercy, plentifully to reap it at the hand of God, with an hundred-fold increase, and that the blessing from God, the father of mercies, may be upon them all, as on the sons of mercy, as many as are the sands on the sea-shore in multitude. The same God grant, that the words which we have heard this day, &c.

O F

D U E L S.

PREACHED AT THE HAGUE.

Numb. xxxv. 33.

And the land cannot be cleansed of blood that is shed in it ; but by the blood of him that shed it.

THESE words are like unto a scorpion : for as in that, so in these, the self-same thing is both poison and remedy : blood is the poison, blood is the remedy ; he that is stricken with the scorpion, must take the oil of the scorpion to cure him ; he that hath poisoned a land with the sin of blood, must yield his own blood for antidote to cure it. It might seem strange, that I should amongst Christians thus come and deliver a speech of blood, For when I read the notes and characters of a Christian in holy scriptures, methinks it should be almost a sin for such a one to name it. ‘ Possess your souls in patience,’ Luke xxi. 19. ‘ By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.’ John xiii. 35. ‘ Peace I leave with you.’ John xiv. 27. ‘ The fruit of the Spi-

'rit is love, joy, peace in the Holy Ghost.' Rom. xiv. 17. 'Let your moderation be known to all men.' Philip. iv. 5. 'The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy.' Jam. iii. 17. It is reported of Avenzoar, a great physician, that he was so tender-hearted, that he could not endure to see a man let-blood: he that should read these passages of scripture, might think that Christians were like Avenzoar, that the sight of blood should be enough to affright them. But is the common Christian so soft, so tender-hearted? is he so peaceable, so tame and tractable a creature? You shall not find two things of more different countenance and complexion, than that Christianity which is commended unto us in the writings of the apostles and evangelists, and that which is current in use and practice of the times. He that shall behold the true face of a Christian, as it is decyphered and painted out unto us in the books of the New Testament, and impartially compare it with that copy or counterfeit of it, which is exprest in the life and demeanour of common Christians, would think them no more like, than those shields of gold which Solomon made, were unto those of brass which Rehoboam made in their stead: and might suppose that the writers of those books had brought wishes rather than precepts, had rather fancied to themselves some admirable pattern of a Christian, such as they could wish, than delivered rules and

laws, which seriously and indeed ought or could be practised in common life and conversation. St. James observes, that ' he which beholds his natural face in a glass, goes his way, and immediately ' forgets what manner of man he was.' i. 23. Beloved, how careful we are to look upon the glass, the books of holy scriptures, I cannot easily pronounce; but this I am sure of, we go our ways, and quickly forget what manner of shape we saw there. As Jacob and Esau had both one father, Isaac; both one mother, Rebecca; yet the one was smooth and plain, the other rough and hairy, of harsh and hard countenance and condition: so these two kinds of Christians, of which but now I spake, though both lay claim to one father and mother, both call themselves the sons of God, and the sons of the church, yet are they almost as unlike as Jacob and Esau; the one smooth, gentle, and peaceable, the other rough and harsh. The notes and characters of Christians, as they are described in holy scriptures, are patience, easily putting up and digesting of wrongs; humility, preferring all before ourselves: and St. James tells us, that ' the wisdom that is from above, is first ' pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated.' iii. 17. St James indeed hath given the first place unto purity, and it were almost a sin to compare Christian virtues together, and make them strive for precedency and place. For what Solomon saith upon another occasion, is here much

more true, 'Say not, Why is this thing better than that? for every thing in its time is seasonable.' Eccles. vii. 10. Yet he that shall mark how every where the scriptures commend unto us gentleness and meekness, and that peace is it, 'which,' as Tertullian speaks, 'the apostles endeavour with all the strength and force of the Holy Ghost to plant amongst us *,' might a little invert the words of St. James, and read them thus, 'The wisdom that is from above, is first peaceable, then pure.' The Son of God, who is the Wisdom of the Father, and who for us men came down from heaven, first, and before all other virtues, commended this unto the world: for when he was born, the song of the angels was, 'Peace upon earth, and good will towards men.' Luke ii. 14. All his doctrine was peace, his whole life was peaceable, and 'no man heard his voice in the streets;' Matth. xii. 19. his last legacy and bequest left unto his disciples was the same; 'Peace,' saith he, 'I leave unto you, my peace I give unto you:' John xiv. 27. As Christ, so Christians. In the building of Solomon's Temple, there was no noise of any hammer, of any instrument of iron; so in the spiritual building and frame of a Christian, there is no sound of iron, no noise of any weapons, nothing but peace and gentleness. 'Unadvised anger,' saith St. Austin, 'by the law of faith is as great a sin, as murder was

* Quam nobis apostoli totis viribus Spiritus Sancti commendant. De Patientia c. 12.

‘ by the law of Moses*.’ As some physicians have thought, that in man’s body, the spleen hath very little use, and might well be spared; and therefore in dealing with sundry diseased persons, they endeavour by physic to abate, and take away that part in them, as much as may be; so if we look into a Christian man, as he is proposed to us in the gospel, we may justly marvel to what purpose God hath planted in him this faculty and passion of anger, since he hath so little use of it; and the gospel, in a manner, doth spiritually diet and physic him for it, and endeavours much to abate, if not quit to purge out, that quality.

Beloved, we have hitherto seen who Jacob is, and what manner of man the Christian is, that is described unto us in holy scripture. Let us a little consider his brother Esau, the Christian in passage, and who commonly, in the account of the world, goes for one. Is he so gentle and tractable a creature? Is his countenance so smooth, his body so free from gall and spleen? To try this, as the devil sometimes spake unto Job, ‘ Touch him in his goods, touch him in his body, and see if he will not curse thee to thy face:’ Job i. 10. ii. 9. so touch this man a little in his goods, touch him in his reputation and honour, touch him in any thing that he loves, (for this is the only way to try how far these commands of peace, and for-

* Ex praecepto fidei non minus rea ira est sine ratione suscepta, quam in operibus legis homicidium.

bearance, and long suffering prevail with us) and see if he will not forget and lose all his patience. Which of us is there that understands the words and precepts of our Saviour in their literal sense, and as they lie? The precepts of suffering wrong, rather than to go to law; of yielding the coat to him that would take the cloak, of readiness to receive more wrongs, than to revenge one: these and all the evangelical commands of the like nature we pervert by our comments: we have found out favourable interpretations and glosses, restrictions and evasions, to wind ourselves out of them, to shift them all off, and put them by, and yet pass for sound and current Christians: we think we may be justly angry, continue long suits in law, call to the magistrate for revenge, yea, sometimes take it into our own hands: all this and much more we think we may lawfully, and with good reason do, any precept of Christ to the contrary notwithstanding. And as it usually comes to pass, the permitting and tolerating lesser sins opens way to greater, so by giving passage and inlet to those lesser impatiences and discontents, we lay open a gap to those fouler crimes, even of murder and bloodshed. For as men commonly suppose, that all the former breaches of our patience, which but now I mentioned, may well enough stand with the duties of Christians: so there are who stay not here, but think that in some cases it may be lawful, yea, peradventure necessary, at least very par-

donable, for Christians privately to seek each other's blood, and put their lives upon their swords, without any wrong to their vocation; out of this have sprung many great inconveniences, both private and public.

First, Laws made too favourable in case of bloodshed. *Secondly*, A too much facility and easiness in princes and magistrates sometimes to give pardon and release for that crime. *Thirdly* and chiefly (for it is the special cause indeed that moved me to speak in this argument) An over-promptness in many young men, who desire to be counted men of valour and resolution, upon every slight occasion to raise a quarrel, and admit of no other means of composing and ending it, but by sword and single combat. Partly therefore to shew the grievousness and greatness of this sin of bloodshed, and partly to give the best counsel I can for the restraint of those conceits and errors which give way unto it, I have made choice of these few words out of the Old Testament which but now I read. In the New Testament there is no precept given concerning bloodshed. The apostles seem not to have thought that Christians ever should have had need of such a prohibition; for what needed to forbid those to seek each other's blood, who are not permitted to speak over hastily one to another. When therefore I had resolved with myself to speak something concerning the sin of bloodshed, I was in a manner constrained to reflect upon the Old Testament;

and make choice of these words; 'And the land
' cannot be purged of blood that is shed in it, but
' by the blood of him that shed it.'

In which words, for my more orderly proceeding, I will observe these two general parts: *First*, The greatness of the sin. *Secondly*, The means to cleanse and satisfy for the guilt of it. The first, that is, the greatness of the sin, is expressed by two circumstances. *First*, By the generality, extent, and largeness of the guilt of it: and *secondly*, By the difficulty of cleansing it. The largeness and compass of the guilt of this sin is noted unto us in the word *land*, 'and the land cannot be purged.' It is true, in some sense, of all sins, 'no man
' sins in private, and to himself alone*;' for as the scripture notes of that action of Jephtha, when he vowed his daughter unto God, 'That it became a custom in Israel,' Judg. xi. 39. so is it in all sins: the error is only in one person, but the example spreads far and wide; and thus every man that sins, sins against the whole land, yea, against the whole world. For who can tell how far the example and infection of an evil action doth spread? In other sins the infection is no larger than the disease, but this sin like a plague; one brings the infection, but thousands die for it†; yet this sin of blood diffuses and spreads itself above all other sins; for in other sins the guilt of

* Nemo sibi uni errat. Seneca de Vita Beata. c. i.

† 'Ολέκοντο δὲ λαοί. Hom. Iliad. A. v. 9.

them is confined to the person that committed them*; God himself hath pronounced of them, 'The son shall not bear the sins of the father, the 'foul that sinneth shall die the death:' Ezech. xviii. 20. But the sin of blood seems to claim an exception from this law; if by time it be not purged, like the frogs of Egypt, the whole land stank of them; it leaves a guilt upon the whole land in which it is committed. Other sins come in like rivers, and break their banks to the prejudice and wrong of private persons; but this comes in like a sea, raging and threatening to overwhelm whole countries. If blood in any land do lie unrevenged, every particular soul hath cause to fear, lest part of the penalty fall on him. We read in 2 Sam xxi. that long after Saul's death, God plagued the land of Jewry with three years famine, because Saul in his life-time had, without any just cause, shed the blood of some of the Gibeonites; neither the famine ceased, till seven of Saul's nephews had died for it. In this story there are many things rare, and worth our observation. First, The generality and extent of the guilt of bloodshed, (which is the cause for which I urged it,) it drew a general famine on the whole land. Secondly, The continuance and length of the punishment; it lasted full three years and better. Thirdly, The time of the plague; it fell long after the person of-

* Noxa sequitur caput.

fending was dead. Fourthly, Whereas it is said in my text, 'That blood is cleansed by the blood of him that shed it:' here the blood of him that did this sin sufficed not to purge the land from it; that desperate and woful end that befel both Saul and his sons in that last and fatal battle upon Mount Gilboa, a man may think had freed the land from danger of blood: yet we see that the blood of the Gibeonites had left so deep a stain, that it could not be sponged out without the blood of seven more of Saul's off-spring. So that in some cases it seems we must alter the words of my text, 'The land cannot be purged of blood, but by the blood of him and his posterity that shed it.' St. Paul tells us, that 'some men's sins go before them into judgment, and some men's sins follow after.' 1 Tim. v. 24. Beloved, here is a sin that exceeds the members of this division, for howsoever it goes before or after us unto judgment, yet it hath a kind of ubiquity, and so runs afore, so follows us at the heels, that it stays behind us too, and calls for vengeance long after that we are gone. Blood unrevenged passes from father to son like an heirloom or legacy: and he that dies with blood hanging on his fingers, leaves his off-spring and his family as pledges to answer it in his stead. As an engineer that works in a mine, lays a train, or kindles a match, and leaves it behind him, which shall take hold of the powder long after he is gone; so he that sheds blood, if it be not betimes pur-

ged, as it were kindles a match, able to blow up not only a parliament, but even a whole land, where blood lies unrevenge'd.

Secondly, Another circumstance serving to express unto us the greatness of this sin, I told you, was the difficulty of cleansing it, intimated in those words, 'cannot be cleansed but by the blood of him that shed it.' Most of other sins have sundry ways to wash the guilt away; as in the Levitical Law, the woman that was unclean by reason of child-bearing, might offer a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons: so he that travels with other sins, hath either a turtle or a pigeon, he hath more ways than one to purify him: prayer unto God, or true repentance, or satisfaction to the party wronged, or bodily affliction, or temporary mulct. But he that travels with the sin of blood, for him there remains no sacrifice for sin, but a fearful expectation of vengeance; he hath but one way of cleansing, only his blood, 'the blood of him that shed it.'

The *second* general part which we considered in these words, was, that one mean which is left to cleanse blood, express'd in the last words, 'the blood of him that shed it.' The Apostle to the Hebrews, speaking of the sacrifices of the Old Testament, notes, that without blood there was no cleansing, no forgiveness. He spake it only of the blood of beasts, of bulls and goats, who therefore have their blood, that they may shed it in man's

service, and for man's use. But among all the Levitical sacrifices, there was not one to cleanse the manslayer; for the blood of the cattle upon a thousand hills was not sufficient for this, yet was that sin to be purged with blood too, and *that* by a more constant and perpetual law than that of sacrifices. For the cleansing of other sins by blood is done away; the date of it is out; but to cleanse blood by blood remains as a law to our times, and so shall unto the world's end: 'out of blood no way to get but by blood*.' 'Hast thou shed blood?' saith St. Basil, 'wouldst thou be free from the guilt of it? thy best way is to be a martyr, and shed thy blood for Christ's sake †.'

Now that what I have to say may the better be conceived and lodged up in your memories, I will comprehend and order all that I will speak under three heads. *First*, I will, in general, yet a little further, briefly shew how great a sin the sin of blood is. *Secondly*, I will speak of the redress of some misorders very frequent in our age, which give way to this sin, especially private revenge and single combat. *Thirdly*, I will touch at the means of taking the guilt of blood away, which here the Hold Ghost commends to those which are set in authority to that purpose.

And *first*, of the greatness of the crime and sin of blood. Of sins in holy scripture there be two

* — Sanguine quaerendi reditus. Aeneid. ii. 118.

† Ἐπονύβας; μαρτύρησον.

sorts recorded. One sort is a silent, dumb, and quiet sin; God doth, as it were, seek after it to find it, as the people did after Saul, when he was hidden amongst the stuff: of this nature are the ordinary sins of our life, which do more easily find pardon at the hands of God; but there is a second sort of sin, which is a vocal and a crying sin, a sin, like that importunate widow in the gospel, that will not suffer the judge to be quiet, till he hath done justice; and those are the more heavy and grievous sins of our lives: of this second sort, there are two sins, to which the scripture doth attribute this crying faculty. First, the sin of Sodom; for so God tells Abraham, 'The cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is come up before me.' Gen. xviii. 20. The second is the sin of which I am now to speak, the sin of bloodshed; for so God tells Cain, 'The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the earth.' Gen. iv. 10. The sin of Adam in paradise doubtless was a great and heinous sin, which hath thus made us all the children of death; yet it seems to be but of the rank of mute sins, and to have had no voice to betray it; God comes unto Adam, converses him, examines him, as if he had not known it, and seems not to believe any such thing was done, till himself had confessed it. But blood is an unmannerly, importunate, and clamorous sin, God shall not need to come and enquire after it, it will come up unto him, and cry as the souls do under the altar

in the Revelation, 'How long, Lord, how long?' it suffers not God to forget judgment, or entertain a thought of mercy*. To satisfy therefore the cry of this importunate sin, and to shew men the grievousness of it, the laws of God and men have wonderfully conspired in the avenging of blood, by what means, or by what creature soever it were shed. Beasts, unreasonable creatures, though whatsoever they do, they cannot be said to sin: for whatsoever they do, they do by force of that natural instinct, by which they are guided and led as by their proper law; yet man's blood, if they shed it, is revenged upon them: God himself is the author of this law, (Gen. ix. 5.) where he tells Noah, 'The blood of your lives I will require, at the hands of every beast will I require it:' and accordingly in Exodus, he precisely enacts a law of the ox that goreth, 'If an ox gore a man that he die, the ox shall be slain, and the flesh cast away as an abomination on.' xxi. 28. The laws of natural men, who had no knowledge of God, come little behind this; yea, they may seem to have gone before it in severe revenging of blood: for amongst the laws by which Athens, that famous city of Greece, was governed, there was one, that if a wall by chance had fallen down, and slain a man, as the tower of Siloam did, of which we read in the gospel; that then the judges should sit, and formally arraign that wall,

* Neque per nostrum patimur scelus

Iracunda Jovem ponere fulmina.

Horat. od. i.

condemn it, and throw the stones of it out of the country*. This so formal proceeding against unreasonable, against dull and senseless creatures, hath been thus jointly both by God and man practised, only for our example, to teach us how precious the life of man ought to be in our eyes: and it resembles that action of Christ in the gospel, where, for our instruction, he curses the barren fig-tree †.

Now as exemplary justice is severely done on these creatures for man's instruction; so much more if man himself keep not his hands clean from blood, did the laws of God proceed with much strictness and severity: for to say nothing of gross, malicious, and wilful murder; if a man only in his haste strook another with a weapon, or with a stone, so that he died, though the striker intended but to hurt, yet he was to die for it. That he did it in anger, that he did it in his drink, that he did it provoked, that he did it in defence of his honour and reputation, none of all these pretences might excuse him. Nay, which is yet more, God himself propounds the case; 'If,' saith he, 'a man cleaving wood, his ax head shie off, and hit his neighbour, so that he kills him,' Deut. xix. 5. except he could recover one of the cities of refuge, he was to die; and having recovered a city of refuge, if before the death of the high priest he

* Vid. Petit in Leg. Attic. lib. vii. tit. 1. p. 523.

† Sterilitas nostra in sicu vapulat.

were taken without the walls of the city, he was to die. So strict was God in the case of chance-medley, (as they call it) in a case which he takes unto himself, and makes himself the author of. For in the xxi. of Exodus 13. speaking of the man that thus sheds blood by chance and unwittingly, his words are these, ' If a man lie not in wait, but ' God put him into his hands, I will appoint him a ' city of refuge to flee unto.' In which words God acknowledges, that he who thus dies by chance, dies by his providence, and not by the sin of him that slew him. ' If God (saith he) shall put him ' into his hands;' yet you see what a penalty he lays upon the innocent instrument of such bloodshed. The blood that is shed in battle, and in times of lawful war, you all suppose as lawfully shed; yet notwithstanding, Moses, in the xvi. of Numbers, gives charge, that the soldiers returning from battle, should stay a while without the camp, even seven days, until they were cleansed: again, when David advised with himself about the building of an house unto God, he sends him word to lay by all thought of that, he was no fit person to do it; and he gives the reason of it, ' For thou art a man hast shed much blood, and ' fought many battles.' 1 Chr. xxviii. 3. Beloved, the battles which David fought were called the Lord's battles, and therefore whatsoever he did in that kind, he had doubtless very good warrant to do; and yet you see, that it is an impu-

tation to him, that he shed blood, though lawfully; so that it seems blood cannot be justly shed, but that it brings with it some stain and spot of injustice †.

All this I have said to raise up in you, as much as possibly I can, a right conceit of the height and heinousness of this sin, and further, yet to effect this in you, as in the beginning and entrance into my discourse, I briefly toucht at two reasons, shewing the greatness of this sin, occasioned thereunto by the words of my text: so will I as briefly touch at the two more tending to the same purpose; one drawn from the respect of the wrong, which by this sin is done unto God; another from the wrong done to ourselves.

And *first*, what wrong is done unto God: God himself shews us in the ix. of Genesis; where giving this for an everlasting law, 'He that sheddeth man's blood, by man let his blood be shed;' he presently adds the reason of it, 'for in the image of God made he man.' v. 6. We shall the better understand the force of this reason, if we look a little into civil actions. It is the usual manner of subjects, when they rebel against the prince, to think they cannot more effectually express their hate, than by disgracing, breaking, throwing down the statues and images erected to his honour: The citizens of Antioch, in a sedition against Theodo-

† Ut fundi sanguis ne iuste quidem, sine aliqua iniuria possit.

thus the Emperor, in one night disgracefully threw down all his statues; which fact of theirs caused St. Chrysostom, at that time preacher to that city, to make those famous sermons, which from that action to this day are called 'his statues*.' This by so much the more is counted a great offence, because, next unto wronging and disgracing the very person of the prince, a greater insolence cannot be offered: for it expresseth with what welcome they would entertain him, if they had him in their power. Beloved, man is the image of his Maker, erected by him as a statue of his honour: he then that shall despitefully handle, batter, and deface it, how can he be counted otherwise than guilty of the highest treason against his Maker. 'Rebel-lion,' saith Samuel to Saul, 'is like the sin of 'superstition and idolatry.' 1 Sam. xv. 23. The sin of blood therefore equals the sin of idolatry, since there cannot be a greater sin of rebellion against God, than to deface his image. Idolatry, through ignorance, sets up a false image of God, but this sin, through malice, defaces, pulls down the true. Amongst the Heathen, sometimes the statues of the Emperors were had in such respect, that they were accounted sanctuaries, and such as for offence fled unto them, it was not lawful to touch. Beloved, such honour ought we to give unto a man, that if he have offended us, yet the image of God which shines in him ought to be as

* Ἀνδριάντις.

a sanctuary unto him, to save him from our violence, an admonitioner unto us, that we ought not to touch him.

A *second* reason, yet further shewing the heinousness of this sin, is drawn from the wrong which is done to ourselves. All other wrongs, whatsoever they be, admit of some recompence; honours, wealth, preferments, if they be taken from us, they may return, as they did unto Job, in far greater measure, and the party wronged may receive full and ample satisfaction; but, what recompence may be made to a man for his life? When that is gone, all the kingdoms which our Saviour saw in the mount, and the glory of them, are nothing worth, neither is all the world, all the power of men and angels, able to give the least breath to him that hath lost it. Nothing under God is able to make satisfaction for such a wrong; the revenge that is taken afterward upon the party that hath done the wrong, cannot be counted a recompence; that is done to the terror of the living, not for the aid of the dead †; it serves to deter the living from committing the like outrage, but it can no way help him that is dead: David at the same time committed two sins, great sins, murder and adultery; the reward of either of which, by God's law, is nothing else but death; yet for his adultery he seems to make some satisfaction to the party wronged; for the text notes, that

† In terrorem viventium, non in subsidium mortuorum.

David took her to his wife, made her his queen, and that he went in unto her, and comforted her: all which may well be counted at least a part of recompence. But for dead Urias, what means could David make to recompence, to comfort him? For this cause I verily suppose it is, that in his penitential psalm, wherein he bewails his sin, he makes no particular confession, no mention of his adultery; but of the other, of blood, he is very sensible, and expressly prays against it: 'Deliver me ' from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my ' salvation;' Ps. li. 14. as if adultery in comparison of murder were no crime at all.

I am sorry I should have any just occasion amongst Christian men, so long to insist upon a thing so plain; and shew that the sin of blood is a great and heinous sin: but, he that shall look into the necessities of these times, shall quickly see that there is a great cause why this doctrine should be very effectually prest: for many things are even publicly done, which in part argue that men esteem of this sin much more slightly than they ought. Aristotle observed it of Phaleas, one that took upon him to prescribe laws by which a commonwealth might, as he thought, be well governed, 'That he had taken order for the preventing ' of smaller faults, but he left way enough open ' to greater crimes*.' Beloved, the error of our

* Ὅτι πρὸς τὰς μικρὰς ἀδικίας βοηθητικὸς μόνον ὁ τρόπος τῆς Φαλὲν πολιτείας. Polit. lib. ii. c. 7.

laws is not so great as that of Phaleas was; yet we offend too, though on the contrary, and the less dangerous side; for great and grievous sins are by them providently curbed, but many inferior crimes find many times too free passage. Murther, though all be abominable, yet there are degrees in it, some is more heinous than other. Gross, malicious, premeditated, and wilful murther, are by our laws, so far as human wisdom can provide, sufficiently prevented: but murders done in haste, or besides the intent of him that did it, or in point of honour and reputation, these find a little too much favour; our laws in this respect are somewhat defective, both in preventing that it be not done, and punishing it when it is done; men have thought themselves wiser than God, presuming to moderate the unnecessary severity (as they seem to think) of his laws. And hence it comes to pass, that in military companies, and in all great cities and places of mart and concourse, few months, yea, few weeks, pass without some instance and example of bloodshed, either by sudden quarrel, or by challenge to duel and single combat. How many examples, in a short space, have we seen of young men, men of hot and fiery disposition, mutually provoking and disgracing each other, and then taking themselves bound in high terms of valour, and honour, to end their quarrels by their swords? That therefore we may the better discover the unlawfulness of challenge and private

combat, let us a little enquire and examine in what cases blood may lawfully, and without offence, be shed; that so we may see where, amongst these, single combat may find its place.

The Manichees were of opinion, that it was not lawful to violate any thing in which there was life; and therefore they would not pull a branch from a tree, because, forsooth, there was life in it. To think that man's life may in no case be taken from him, is but a branch of Manicheism: and the words of my text do directly cross it, where it is laid down, that for the cleansing of blood, blood may and must be shed. For the avoiding therefore of the extreme, we are to note, that the lawful causes of bloodshed are either public or private: public cases are two; first, in case of justice, when a malefactor dies for his sin by the hand of the magistrate. Secondly, in case of public war and defence of our country; for the doctrine of Christ is not, as some have supposed, an enemy to soldiership and military discipline. When John the Baptist began to preach repentance and amendment of life, amongst those that came forth to understand and learn their duty, the text saith, that 'the soldiers came and asked him, 'Master, what shall we do?' Luke iii. 14. And John wills them not to lay down their weapons, or to take another course of life (which he ought and would have done, if that course had been unlawful) but he instructs them rather in their calling;

for, he gives them these two lessons, 'Do no man wrong; and, Be content with your pay, your wages;' than which there could not have been better, or more pertinent counsel given to soldiers, these being the two principal vices of soldiers, to wrong places where they live, by forage and pillage, and to mutiny in dislike of their pay. When St. Peter came to preach to the Centurion in the Acts, we find not a syllable in all that sermon prejudicial to a soldier's profession. And therefore, accordingly, in the times of the primitive church, Christians served even under Heathen Emperors, and *that* with the approbation of God himself.

For in the ecclesiastic story we read of the *Legio fulminatrix*, of a band of soldiers called the Thundering Band, because that at what time Marcus the Emperor lying with his army in Germany, was afflicted with a great drought, and in great danger of the enemy, when they were now about to join battle, the Christian soldiers (that band) fell flat on their faces, and by their instant prayers obtained of God a great tempest, which to the Emperor and his army brought store of cold refreshing water; but upon the enemy nothing else but fire and whirl-wind. The Emperor's epistle, in which this story is related, is this day extant, recovered by Justin Martyr, who lived about the time the thing was done †: wherefore we may not

† This story of the Thundering Legion is generally exploded among the learned. That the Roman army was relie-

doubt of the lawfulness of that profession, which it hath pleased God thus to grace, and honour with such a miracle. Besides these two, there are no other public causes of bloodshed. As for the causes in private, I know but one, and that is, when a man is set upon, and forced to it, in his own defence. If a thief be robbing in the night, and be slain, the law of God acquits him that did it: and by the Roman laws it was lawful to kill a thief by night at any hand, and by day if he used his weapon *. Of private bloodshed there is no cause but this, and this we must needs allow of. For in all other private necessities into which we may be

ved by a plentiful rain seems undeniable; but that this rain was procured by the prayers of Christian soldiers is not probable. Eusebius, after having related this incident in the words of Tertullian, adds, But of this let every one judge as he thinks fit. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ὅπῃ τις ἰδέσθῃ τίθεσθω. Hist. Eccles. lib. v. c. 5. With respect to the Emperor's epistle, here mentioned, it is universally confessed to be a forgery, and that of a much later date than the age of Justin Martyr. Even Huetius, credulous and incorrect as he is, gives it up. His words are, 'Habetur harum literarum exemplar apud Justinum, ad calcem Apologiae secundae; sed ejus νοθεύων et κίβδηλόν, tam etiam novitatem, quod Justiniano recentius sit, tot argumentis approbarunt viri eruditi, et criticae artis principes, Josephus Scaliger et Salmasius, ut nihil contra opponi possit.' Demonst. Evangel. propof. iii. §. 19.

* Lex duodecim tabularum furem noctu deprehensum occidere permittit; ut tamen id ipsum cum clamore testificetur. Interdiu autem deprehensum ita permittit occidere, si is se telo defendat, ut tamen aequè cum clamore testificetur. L. iv. §. 1. Dig. ad Leg. Aquil.

driven, the law and magistrate have place, to whom we must repair for remedy: but in case of defence of life against sudden onset, no law can be made, except we would make a law to yield our throats to him that would cut them, or our laws were like the prophet that came to Jeroboam at Bethel, and could dry up men's arms that offered violence. Wherefore all cause of death, one only excepted, is public, and that for great reason. For to die is not a private action to be undertaken at our own, or at any other private man's pleasure and discretion: for, as we are not born unto ourselves alone, but for the service of God, and the commonwealth in which we live; so no man dies to himself alone, but with the damage and loss of that church or commonwealth of which he is a member: wherefore it is not left to any private man's power to dispose of any man's life, no not to our own, only God and the magistrate may dispose of this. As soldiers in the camp must keep their standing, neither may they move or alter, but by direction from the captain; so is it with us all: our life is a warfare, and every man in the world hath his station and place, from whence he may not move at his own, or at another man's pleasure, but only at the direction and appointment of God, his general, or of the magistrates, which are as captains and lieutenants under him. Then our lawful times of death are either when our day is come, or to fall in battle, or for misdemeanour

to be cut off by the public hand of justice, 'that
' the public might profit by the death of those,
' who, while living, would not be useful *.' He
which otherwise dies, comes by surreption and
stealth, and not warrantably, unto his end.

And though we have spoken something in apo-
logy and defence of war, yet you may not think,
that in time of war your hands are loose, and that
you may at your pleasure shed the blood of your
enemy: 'Even in war and battle (saith St. Au-
stin) ' there is room for thoughts of peace and
' mercy †;' and therefore many of the antient he-
roes, renowned soldiers and captains, were very
conscientious of shedding the blood of their ene-
mies, except it were in battle, and when there
was no remedy to avoid it. In that mortal battle,
2 Sam. ii. 22, 23. between the servants of David
and the servants of Ishbosheth, the scripture reports
that Abner fled, and Azahel, Joab's brother, fol-
lowing him hard at heels to kill him, Abner advi-
ses him twice, 'Turn aside,' saith he, 'why should
' I smite thee to the ground;' but when Azahel
would not hearken, but followed him still for his
blood, then he struck him with his spear that he
died: in the time of war, when he might lawfully
have done it, in the fury of the battle, Abner

* Ut qui vivi prodesse noluerunt, eorum morte respublica
utatur.

† Misericorditer enim, si fieri posset etiam bella gererentur
a bonis. Epist. cxxxviii.

would not shed blood, but by constraint. Xenophon would make us believe, that the soldiers in Cyrus his army were so well disciplined, that one of them in time of the battle, having lift up his arm to strike his enemy, hearing the trumpet to begin to sound the retreat, let fall his arm, and willingly lost his blow, because he thought the time of striking was now past *: so far were these men from thinking it lawful to shed the blood of a subject in time of peace, that they would not shed the blood of an enemy in time of war, except it were in the field. Julius Caesar was one of the greatest and stoutest captains that ever was in the world, he stood the shock of fifty set battles, besides all sieges and out-roads; he took a thousand cities and walled towns; he over-run three hundred several countreys, and in his wars were slain well near twelve hundred thousand men, besides all those that died in the civil wars, which were great numbers; yet this man protested of himself, and that most truly, 'that he never drew blood but in the field, never slew any man, but 'in a set battle †: I have been a little the bolder, in bringing these instances of Heathen men; First, because the doctrine of Christ, through error, is

* This is related of a Spartan by Plutarch. *Apotheg. Lacon. in fin.*

† Quod dicere solebat, praestitit, neminem occidit nisi armatum. *Seneca de Benef. lib. v. c. 16.* Neminem nisi acie consumptum civem patria desideravit. *Vell. Patere. lib. ii.*

counted an enemy to policy of war and martial discipline; Secondly, because we have found out many distinctions and evasions to elude the precepts of our blessed Saviour and his apostles: for as it hath been observed of the god-makers, I mean the painters and statuaries among the Heathen, they were wont many times to paint their goddesses like their mistresses, and then think them most fair, when they were most like what they best loved: so is it with many professors of Christian religion, they can temper the precepts of it to their liking, and lay upon them glosses and interpretations as it were colours, and make it look like what they love: Thirdly, because it is likely that the examples of these men will most prevail with those to whom I speak, as being such to whom above all they affect to be most like; except therefore it be their purpose to hear no other judgment, but only their own unruly and disorderly affections, it cannot but move them to see the examples of men, guided only by the light of reason, of men, I say, the most famous in all the world for valour and resolution, to run so mainly against them.

To come then unto the question of duels; both by the light of reason, and by the practice of men it doth appear, that there is no case wherein subjects may privately seek each other's lives: there are extant the laws of the Jews, framed by God himself; the laws of the Roman em-

pire, made partly by the Ethnic, partly by Christian princes; a great part of the laws of Sparta and Athens (two warlike commonwealths, especially the former) lie dispersed in our books; yet amongst them all is there not a law or custom that permits this liberty to subjects: the reason of it, I conceive, is very plain; the principal thing, next under God, by which a commonwealth doth stand, is the authority of the magistrate, whose proper end is to compose and end quarrels between man and man, upon what occasion soever they grow; for were men peaceable, were men not injurious one to another, there were no use of government: wherefore to permit men in private to try their own rights, or to avenge their own wrongs, and so to decline the sentence of the magistrate, is quite to cut off all use of authority. Indeed it hath been sometimes seen, that the event of a battle, by consent of both armies, hath been put upon single combat, to avoid further effusion of blood; but combats betwixt subjects for private causes, till these latter ages of the world, was never allowed: yet, I must confess, the practice of it is very ancient; for Cain, the second man in the world, was the first duelist, the first that ever challenged the field; the text saith, that Cain spake unto his brother, and when they were in the field, he arose and slew him. Gen. iv. 8. The Septuagint, to make the sense more plain, do add another clause,

and tell us what it was he said unto his brother; 'Let us go out into the field*;' and when they were in the field, he arose and slew him: 'Let us go out into the field,' it is the very form and proper language of a challenge. Many times indeed our gallants can formalize in other words, but evermore the substance, and usually the very words are no other but these of Cain, 'Let us go out into the field.' Abel, I persuade myself, understood them not as a challenge; for had he so done, he would have made so much use of his discretion, as to have refused it; yet can we not chuse but acknowledge a secret judgment of God in this, that the words of Cain should still be so religiously kept till this day, as a proeme and introduction to that action, which doubtless is no other than what Cain's was. When therefore our gallants are so ready to challenge the field, and to go into the field, let them but remember whose words they use, and so accordingly think of their action.

Again, notwithstanding duels are of so antient and worshipful a parentage, yet could they never gain so good acceptance as to be permitted, much less to be counted lawful, in the civil part of the world, till barbarism had over-ran it. About five or six hundred years after Christ, at the fall of the Roman empire, abundance of rude and barbarous people brake in and possessed the civiler part of the

* *Διήλωσαν ἕως τὸ πρὸς.*

world; who abolishing the antient laws of the empire, set up many strange customs in their rooms. Amongst the rest, for the determining of quarrels that might arise in case of doubtful title, or of false accusation, or the like, they put themselves upon many unusual forms of trial; as, to handle red hot iron, to walk bare-foot on burning coals, to put their hands and feet in scalding water, and many other of the like nature, which are reckoned up by Hottoman a French lawyer: for they presumed so far on God's providence, that if the party accused were innocent, he might do any of these without any smart or harm. In the same cases, when by reason of unsufficient and doubtful evidence, the judges could not proceed to sentence, as sometimes it falls out, and the parties contending would admit of no reasonable composition, their manner was to permit them to try it out by their swords; that so the conqueror might be thought to be in the right. They permitted, I say, thus to do; for at the best it was but a permission to prevent farther mischief; for to this end sometimes some known abuses are tolerated: so God permitted the Jews upon slight occasions to put their wives away, because he saw, that otherwise their exorbitant lusts would not be bounded within these limits, which he in paradise in the beginning had set. And it is observed of the wise men which had the managing and bringing up of Nero the Emperor, that they suffered

him to practise his lusts upon Acte, one of his mother's chamber-maids, 'Lest if he were forbidden that, he should turn his lust upon some of the noblewomen †.' Permission and toleration warrants not the goodness of any action. But, as Caiaphas said, 'Better one man die, than all the people perish;' John xi. 50. so they that first permitted duels seem to have thought, better one or two mutinous persons, and disorderly, die in their folly, than the whole commonwealth be put into tumult and combustion: yet even by these men it was never so promiscuously tolerated, that every hasty couple, upon the venting of a little choler, should presently draw their swords; but it was a public or solemn action, done by order, with inspection, either of the prince himself, or of some other magistrate appointed to order it. Now certainly there can be no very great reason for that action, which was thus begun by Cain, and continued only by Goths and Vandals, and mere barbarism.

Yet that we may a little better acquaint ourselves with the quality of it, let us a little examine the causes and pretences which are brought by them who call for trial by single combat. The causes are usually two; First, disdain to seem to do or suffer any thing for fear of death: Se-

† Ne in stupra foeminarum illustrium perrumperet, si illa libidine prohiberetur. Tacit. Annal. xiii. c. 12.

condly, point of honour, and not to suffer any contumely and indignity, especially if it bring with it disreputation, and note of cowardise. For the first, disdain to fear death; I must confess I have often wondered with myself, how men durst die so ventrously, except they were sure they died well: in other things which are learned by practising, if we mistake, we may amend it; for the error of a former action may be corrected in the next: we learn then by erring, and men come at length not to err, by having often erred: but no man learns to die by practising it; we die but once, and a fault committed then, can never afterward be amended, because the punishment immediately follows upon the error †. To die is an action of that moment, that we ought to be very well advised when we come to it; on that moment hangs eternity: you may not look back upon the opinion of honour and reputation which remains behind you: but rather look forward upon that infinite space of eternity, either of bliss or bale, which befalls us immediately after our last breath. To be loth to die upon every slight occasion, is not a necessary sign of fear and cowardise: he that knew what life is, and the true use of it, had he many lives to spare, yet would he be

† In aliis rebus siquid erratum est, potest post modum corrigi, quia poena statim sequitur errorem. *Alluding to a saying of Cato recorded by Vegetius. lib. i. c. 13.*

loth to part with one of them upon better terms, than those our books tell us, that Aristippus a philosopher being at sea in a dangerous tempest, and bewraying some fear, when the weather was cleared up, a desperate ruffian came and upbraided him with it, and tells him, That it was a shame that he, professing wisdom, should be afraid of his life; whereas himself, having had no such education, express no agony or dread at all. To whom the philosopher replied, there was some difference between them two: 'I know,' saith he, 'my life may be profitable many ways, and therefore am I loth to lose it; but because of your life you know little profit, little good can be made, you care not how easily you part with it†.' Beloved, it may be justly suspected, that they who esteem thus lightly of their lives, are but worthless and unprofitable men: our own experience tells us, that men who are prodigal of their money in taverns and ordinaries, are close-handed enough, when either pious uses, or necessary and public expence requires their liberality; I have not heard that prodigals ever built churches. So these men that are so prodigal of their lives in base quarrels, peradventure would be cowardly enough, if either public service, or religion did call for their help; I scarcely believe any of them would die martyrs, if the times so requi-

† Diog. Laert. vita Aristip. A. Gellius. lib. xix. c. 1.

red it. Beloved, I do do not go about to persuade any man to fear death, but not to condemn life; life is the greatest blessing God gives in this world, and did men know the worth of it, they would never so rashly venture the loss of it: but now lightly prizing both their own and others blood, they are easily moved to shed it; as fools are easily won to part with jewels, because they know not how to value them. We must deal with our lives, as we do with our money, we must not be covetous of it, desire life for no other use but to live, as covetous persons desire money, only to have it: neither must we be prodigal of life, and trifle it away upon every occasion; but we must be liberal of our lives, know upon what occasion to spare, upon what occasion to spend them. To know where, and when, and in what cases to offer ourselves to die, is a thing of greater skill than a great part of them suppose, who pretend themselves most forward to do it; for brutishly to run upon and hasten unto death, is a thing that many men can do; and we see that brute beasts many times will run upon the spears of such as pursue them: but wisely to look into, and weigh every occasion, and, as judgment and true discretion shall direct, so to entertain a resolution either of life or death; this were true fortitude and magnanimity*. And indeed,

* Nam impetu quodam et instinctu currere ad mortem commune cum multis; deliberare vero et causas ejus expen-

this prodigality and contempt of life is the greatest ground of this quarrellous and fighting humour. There is a kind of men, who, because they condemn their own lives, make themselves lords and commanders of other men's, easily provoking others to venture their blood, because they care not how they lose their own*. Few places of great resort are without these men, and they are the greatest occasioners of bloodshed, you may quickly know them; there are few quarrels wherein they are not either principals, or seconds, or some way or another will have a part in them. Might there be public order taken for the restraint of such men, that make a practice of quarrelling, and because they condemn their own lives, carry themselves so insolently and imperiously towards others: it will prevent much mischief, and free the land of much danger of blood-guiltiness.

The second cause which is much alledged in defence of duels, I told you was point of honour, a conceit that it is dishonourable for men of place and fashion quietly to digest and put up contumely and disgrace; and this they take to be a reason of that authority and strength, as that it must admit of no dispensation.

For answer, First, the true fountain and origi-

dere utque suaserit ratio vitae mortisque consilium suscipere, vel ponere ingentis est animi. Plin. Epist. lib. i. c. 22.

* *Quisquis suam vitam contempsit, tuae dominus est. Senec. Epist. 4.*

nal of quarrel are of another kind, and honour is abused as a pretence: the first occasioners of a great part of them are indeed very dishonourable; let there an inventory be taken of all the challenges that have been made for some time past, and you shall find that the greatest part by far were raised either in taverns, or dicing-houses, or in the stews: pardon me, if in a case of this nature I deal a little plainly; drinking, gaming, and whores, these are those rotten bones that lie hid under this painted sepulchre and title of honour.

Lastly, to conclude, It is a part of our profession, as we are Christians, to suffer wrong and disgrace. Therefore to set up another doctrine, and teach that honour may plead prescription against Christ's precepts, and exempt you from patient enduring of contumely and disgrace, you withstand Christ, and deny your vocation; and therefore are unavoidably apostates. But we lose our labour, who give young men and unsettled persons good advice and counsel; the civil magistrate must lay to his hand and pity them, who want discretion to pity themselves: for as bees, though they fight very fiercely, yet if you cast a little dust amongst them, are presently parted; so the enacting and executing some few good laws, would quickly allay this greatness of stomach and fighting humour. How many have been censured for schismatics and heretics, only because by probable consequence, and afar off, they seemed to over-

throw some Christian principle? But here are men, who walk in our streets, and come to our churches, who openly oppose that great point of Christianity, which concerns our patience, and yet for their restraint, no synod is called, no magistrate stirs, no church-censure is pronounced. The church of Rome hath, long ago, to the disgrace of the reformed churches, shut them out of the number of Christians, and pronounced them all excommunicated persons, who, upon what pretence soever, durst enter the field for duel and single combat.

Theodosius the Emperor enacted it for a law, and it is extant at this day in the Code, a book of laws, that if any man spake disgracefully of the Emperor 'from levity, it should be despised, if 'from madness, held worthy of pity, but if with 'an injurious intention, forgiven *.'

So great a virtue is patience, that for the attaining of it, it is God's will we should suffer ourselves to be contemned as cowards †.

Christ is an example to us of suffering disgrace; let us as the Israelites look up to this serpent, and all the stinging of fiery serpents shall do us no harm.

† Si ex levitate processerit, contemnendum est, si ex insania, miseratione dignissimum, si ex injuria, remittendum. Cod. Theodof. l. ix. T. 4. l. 1.

* Summa virtus habenda patientia est, quam ut caperet homo justus voluit illum Deus pro inerte contemni. Lactant. de vero cultu. lib. vi. c. 18.

We must forsake all and follow Christ: therefore honour and reputation too; if we be ashamed of this pattern of patience, Christ will be ashamed of us.

Now that God may give a blessing to what hath been delivered, let us &c.

THE
DANGER
OF RECEIVING
OUR GOOD THINGS
IN
THIS LIFE.

Preached at Shrove-tide at Eaton-College.*

Luke xvi. 25.

*Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst
thy good things.*

FIRST SERMON ON THE TEXT

THAT man of misery, whose woful end occasioned this discourse in St. Luke, whence I have chosen out these few words as my subject to treat of at this time, much desires that one

* The Author entitles this sermon, 'The Rich Man's Receipti;' and constantly uses the word in the Vulgate receipti, 'thou hast received,' as a noun. Such modes of speech were common in the age of the author, but now they appear uncouth and pedantic. The editor therefore has presumed to vary the phrase,

from the dead might be sent unto his brethren, to give them warning that they come not into that place of torment in which himself was. May I not at this time justly seem to be that messenger? For methinks I come into the pulpit, as young Polydore, in the tragedy, enters the stage, and may speak unto you as he did unto his auditors in another language, 'I come from the pit of the dead, from the gates of utter darkness, where the devil hath his mansion far removed from God *.' First, the sadness of the message with which I come might easily tempt you to think so, as being very unwelcome to the ears of flesh and blood; for, where death is not rest, where shall we find rest? in what shall we joy, if the good things of our life deceive us? Certainly so disconsolate a piece of news could never come, but from some place of extreme sadness. Secondly, the unfitness of the time might help on well to this conceit: there is, saith Abraham in this scripture, 'there is a great gulph betwixt you and us.' Beloved, the difference betwixt those two places here mentioned is not much greater, than is the distance betwixt my text and this time; for the time invites you to that, from which my text affrights you: eating,

*and, instead of a recepisti, has used the expressions, 'an expro-
bation for having received, — the doom thou hast received,' or others of like import.*

* "Ἡ καὶ νεκρῶν κυσθμῶνα καὶ σκότυ πύλας — Διπλῶν, ἢ Ἀδης
χαρὶς εἶναι θεῶν. Eurip. Hecub. v. 1.

drinking, merry-making, all the rest of this rich man's daily service*, these are the subject of the time; but my text pulls you by the ear, and bids you beware, lest even these good things (for so men commonly call them) may be amongst those things, which when time comes, may draw after them this 'remember;' you may be told, Remember you had your Shrove-tide; for what else, I beseech you, was the whole life of this miserable man here, but in a manner a perpetual shroving?

But neither the founness of the message, nor any pretended unseasonableness of the times, must hinder us from communicating unto you what the Spirit of God shall put into our hearts. Let it be unwelcome, what then? Sick persons must not look for smoothing, and much-making, but for that which fits their malady†. And if you plead intemperstivity and unseasonableness, for this the Apostle's rule must be my warrant, 'in season, out of season. 2 Tim. iv. 2. Indeed Solomon tells us, that there is a season, a fitting time for all things; Ecclef. iii. 1. and our moral books tell us of a vice which they call intemperstivity‡, an indiscretion by which unwise and unexperienced men see not what befits times, persons, occasions. But, beloved, the ministers of God's word, who break to you the bread of life, are secure in this

* Totum choragium Epicureum.

† 'Ο νοσίων ἐζητᾷται τὸν καλλοπισμὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ συμφέρον.

‡ Ἀκαίρια.

regard; they can never be in danger of any intemperstivity, indiscretion, so the lesson they teach be true. We need not to stand removing and fitting our sails, all winds blow for us; for every good season is at all times, with all persons, upon all occasions, upon no occasion, profitable. Are you ignorant of your duty? it serves to inform you; Do you already know your duty? it serves to commemorate, and to make you record it; Are you peccant? it serves to reprove you; Are you innocent? it serves to admonish you, and teaches you prevention. ‘Jupiter’s dice,’ we say, ‘always run ‘fortunately*.’ The word of God, wheresoever, whensoever, by whomsoever sown, never returns back fruitless unto him that sent it. St. Bernard, commenting upon the Canticles, takes occasion much to bewail his brother’s death; and by reason of that digression, delivers many profitable lessons concerning our common mortality. But one Berengarius, a bitter enemy unto him, scoffing at him for so doing, asks him in scorn, ‘What hath ‘a funeral to do with a marriage-song†?’ By his leave that made it, this was but a foolish question; for indeed our Christian songs are set to a music, in which there is no fear of discords. As it is said of truth, ‘All truths agree‡;’ so in our Christian music, every note, bound it as you list, is still in

* *‘Αἰ γὰρ εὖ πίπτουσιν οἱ διὸς κύβοι.*

† *Quid funeri cum nuptiis?*

‡ *Omne verum verò consonat.*

tune. Let therefore no cavilling Berengarius ask me, What hath a funeral to do with a marriage-song? What hath a sad sermon to do with Shrove-tide. For, when the Spirit will, who, as we hope, guides us in our choice, the pleasant Canticles shall yield fit matter for a funeral sermon, and times of pleasure and merriment shall well enough combine with sad and melancholic discourses.

Yet one word more, to fit my text to my auditors; a thing here somewhat the more difficult, because of the manner of the phrase, 'Remember thou hast received:' for memory is of things past, and 'thou hast received' is not of things in expectation, but of things already received by us. But we are yet in expectation; what shall befall us we know not; as yet therefore I cannot say as our Saviour doth, 'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears,' Luke iv. 21. let that time never be! for, should we stay to hear from Abraham a *remember*, it would be too late then to preach unto you: yet we must find a way to apply this scripture to us, even for the present; and indeed it is not hard to do it. I have read in my books of a painter, who being desired to picture an horse wallowing in the dust, painted him galloping; and being required why he did so, he answered, Turn the picture. and it will be as you would have it. Beloved, I come this day to give you a *beware*, not a *remember*; to advise you that you beware how you receive your good things in your life,

not to remember that you have done so. And this will I do without any wrong to my text, for do but turn the picture, that which seems to gallop will wallow; do but alter the time, and *remember* will immediately become *beware*. Aristotle tells us, that expectation and memory are but the same thing; for what memory is in regard of things past, that expectation is in regard of things to come. Expectation is but memory antedated, and memory is expectation whose date is out. As it is betwixt expectation and memory, so stands the case betwixt *remember* and *beware*: *beware* is but *remember* antedated; what *remember* is in regard of things past, that is *beware* in regard of things to come. Let us then turn memory into wariness and prevention, and exprobration into counsel and admonition; and forthwith you shall see, that 'Remember that thou hast received,' will become 'Beware that thou receive not;' and so the text will exactly fit us. So come I to the words, 'Son, remember that thou in thy life-time 'receivedst thy good things.' I will branch them into two parts: *First*, a preface, in the first word *son*. *Secondly*, the body of the words themselves, 'Remember thou hast received,' &c. The words we will further divide, if need shall be, when we come to consider of them. In the mean time we will consider of the preface, *Son*.

I have heard that Abraham was a great scholar; what portion of clerkship he hath otherwise and

upon other occasion exprest, I know not; sure I am that here he hath shewed us a wondrous piece of his rhetoric: for, two things most contrary, sweetness and bitterness, compassion and exprobration, in two or three words so strangely couched and mixed together, I have not lightly found; 'Son, remember;' two words near in site and place, but in sense and power infinitely distant: *Son*, a word of bowels, mercy, sweetness; a word in which nature and custom hath summed up and concluded all which lies dispersed in all the names of goodness. Contrarily, *remember*, a word (as here it lies) of bitterness, of sarcasm, of exprobration: for, unto this miserable man here in torments, what could have been more irksome, than to be twitted with, and constrained to remember, his sometime happiness? Could he have learned the art of oblivion, and quite forgotten that ever he was happy, his misery had been yet somewhat less. Never to have tasted happiness abates a great part of misery; but, were there no other misery, yet this were misery enough, to have been happy. It was observed of Domitian the Emperor, that when he made a preface of mercy, it was a certain note he would use the greatest severity: shall we conceive so of Abraham, that to his *son* he added a *remember*, to his preface of mercy he under-joins a sentence of harshness and severity, so to add misery to the enough already miserable, and increase his wo? Reverence to so great a man must teach us

well to weigh what we speak or what we think †. Certainly thus to suppose, were much to wrong so excellent a person. If we shall a little enquire of the learned, whence it comes that Abraham useth this gracious compellation of *son* unto a damned ghost; some will tell us, that he doth it by way of retaliation: the man with whom he speaks had called him father, out of complement therefore and formality he calls him *son*. But this carries a countenance of courtship and levity. Others will say, that he calls him by the name of *son*, because indeed he was so, though by the flesh only; which proves the weaker side. But this had been unprofitable, neither from it could we have raised, for our use, any instruction. Others have thought that Abraham did this out of his natural goodness, and that he therefore used this gentle compellation of *son*, to one utterly cast off, and to be now for ever left under the eternal wrath of God, to teach us this lesson, That in all cases, how desperate soever, unto all persons, though never so forlorn, unto the greatest delinquent, how sinful soever, yet still we must open some window, at least some small crevice, to let our goodness shine through. St. Chrysostom was the man that told me thus, and I must confess I believed him. Saith the great Roman orator, 'Nature hath made me good, but my country and the public good made me to be severe;

† Ἀφίσταμαι. ἀνέρδεια λόγου χεν

Θαμνὰ πακηγύρος. Olymp. i. 84.

‘but neither nature nor my country permit me to
 ‘be cruel*.’ Abraham here hath well exprest
 this, for *son*, *remember*, they are no other than
 ‘nature and my country:’ *Son* comes from his
 bowels and natural goodness; *remember* is but oc-
 casioned out of his duty to God and public good;
 to teach us still to temper our necessary severity
 with some goodness; for mere severity is nothing
 else but cruelty, which neither God nor nature re-
 quires at our hands. The master of the feast in
 the gospel, when he came in to his guests, and saw
 one there without a wedding-garment, though he
 saw he was constrained to pronounce a sharp and
 severe doom, yet he useth Abraham’s method,
 ‘Friend (saith he) how comest thou hither.’ Matth.
 xxii. 12. *Son, Friend*: Here is the true art of
 chiding, this is the proper style wherein we ought
 to reprove. A fair pattern for us, Beloved, who
 in no case more mistake ourselves than in this du-
 ty of check and reproof; who are wont so to chide
 as if we hated, who think foul words to be but
 ornaments of speech, and enchase our discourse
 with bitter language as with pearls, and never think
 we reprove except we be contumelious.

Amongst the antient Roman inscriptions which
 are preserved unto posterity, I find one written up-
 on a Roman gentleman, where, amongst other his
 commendations, it is recorded, ‘He knew not how

* *Me natura misericordem, patria severum, crudelem nec
 patria nec natura esse volunt.*

‘to speak contumeliously to any man †:’ and I have heard it reported of Philip the second, that famous King of Spain in our own memory, that he so wonderfully could contain himself, that in his whole life he never gave any man a harsh word. And indeed I have often wondered with myself, whether there were (not any necessary use, for that I know there is not) but any use at all of opprobrious and reviling language: if there be, it must be either in reproof, or in the administration of justice; if there be a third thing, my experience is too narrow to prompt me with it. But neither reproof, nor chastisement of justice require it, but are best performed without it. It cannot therefore stand either with our judgment, or with our goodness, to make any use of so useless, of so unwelcome a superfluity. It hath been observed of the antient Cornish language, that it afforded no forms of oaths, no phrases to swear in. I should never think our language the poorer, if it were utterly destitute of all forms and phrases of reviling and opprobrious speech. And what then can we conceive why any man should delight in the use of vile language? for it is so useless and so unprofitable a vice, that except a man did love a vice for its own sake, he can give no reason why he doth affect it. On the contrary, the opposite quality is, first, a most welcome virtue; for nothing more ingratiate us with men than that blef-

• *Nescivit quid esset maledicere.*

sing of Nepthali, gracious language, which offends not even those whom it condemns †. Secondly, it is so cheap a virtue; good words are afforded at the same price that evil are. Lastly, it is a prevailing and a winning virtue, even in civil actions. I know you have heard the parable of the north wind and the sun; the wind, with all his raging and blustering, could not make the wayfaring man lay down his cloak; but when the sun had displayed his beams, sent forth his heat, and wrought a while upon him, he makes him retire to the shade, and unbrace himself.

Beloved, as we much desire to be the sons of Abraham the faithful, so let us no less desire to be the sons of Abraham the good: and if we will be the sons of Abraham, then let us follow our Saviour's counsel, and do the works of Abraham; let us strive on all occasions some way or other to express our goodness, and use no more severity than we must needs. Abraham could not release this poor man of his pain, he could not so much as procure a mitigation of it, he found no means to provide him a drop of cold water; yet he found a way to express his goodness, and affords him the appellation of *son*. Love, you say, will creep where it cannot go; it will express itself in small matters, where greater will not permit. This courtesy of Abraham was the least of all; yet what of that? The least is enough where the least is all

† Quae ne illos quidem quos damnat offendit.

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that can be had. Though it do no service to the party for whom it is intended, yet it doth him service that affords it; For, in all our actions we must consider, not only what is good for others, but what becomes us to do, though no benefit accrue to others.

The Psalmist tells us, that 'the mercy of God is over all his works;' Ps. cxlv. 9. and I infer, therefore over his works of judgment too. And who knows then, whether or no the very damned spirits have not some taste of his goodness? Let us imitate God and Abraham; and love we our goodness so well, that even the most undeserving creature may have some experience of it. If we cannot relieve him, yet it shall be some part of goodness to give him the appellation of *son*, to give him good words; that, as God's, so our mercy too may be over all our works. The very faults of men, though they deserve correction, yet withal they deserve pity; and therefore though they demand justice, yet they exclude not goodness, but even naturally call for it. Horace the poet tells us of a painter, who having a good faculty in painting a cypress-tree, delighted on all occasions to shew his skill there; insomuch that being requested to express a shipwrack, he asked if he should paint withal a cypress-tree *. Beloved, let our oc-

* ————— fortasse cupressum

Scis simulare: quid hoc, si fractis enatat expes

Navibus, aere dato qui pingitur?

Horat. de Arte Poëtica. v. 19.

casions be as different as the sea and a cypress-tree, yet, if we love our art of goodness, as well as he did his art of painting the cypress, there will be room enough to express it, if we shall be willing to lay hold of the occasion. So, from the preface, I come to the words, 'Remember thou hast received thy good things.'

You may remember I begged leave of you ere while, for the better use and application I am to make of them, to change the words; and as the crafty steward in the gospel, who advised the creditor to take his book, and instead of an hundred to write down fifty; so I advised you instead of *remember* to write *beware*. For, as the apothecary, when he finds himself at a loss, and cannot procure the drug he would have, takes a *quid pro quo*, as they call it, another drug or simple that shall be of the same, or the like force, to cure the disease; so fares it with me, who now am to cure a spiritual disease in you; *remember*, as it lies in the text, can never cure you: if it could, then might our rich man here have hope to recover heaven; for Abraham applies to him long ago. For your use therefore, I am constrained to lay by *remember*, and take in *beware*, for a *quid pro quo*, because it serves best for the cure I have in hand: that therefore you may not hereafter, when it is too late, hear from Abraham, 'Remember thou hast received,' let me intreat you this day, whilst it is yet time to hear from me, 'Take heed thou

‘ receive not thy good things in thy life : ’ For practise but this *beware*, and you shall never hear of *remember* ; but if *beware* come not in time, you must unavoidably expect a *remember*. Read we therefore our text thus, ‘ Beware thou receive not thy good things. ’ Now, Beloved, this word *beware*, though in place and situation it reflect only upon the word *receive*, yet indeed it hath immediate influence upon every word I read. First, here is the word *receive*, here is a *beware* put upon that to your hand : in some sense therefore or other you may not receive the good things of this life, otherwise why is it cast in this man’s dish that he received them ? The next word is, ‘ thy good things : ’ *thy*, put a *beware* there too ; for indeed they are not thine. When we call the things of the world *ours*, ours is but a word of usurpation ; we peradventure may be some emphyteuticaries, or farmers, or usufructuaries ; but the propriety is in another person. The next word is, ‘ good things ; *good*, put a *beware* there too : advise well how you call them *good*. Were our rich man asked what now he thought ? I persuade myself he would pass another censure of them ; for how good soever they were in themselves, yet to him they were not good. I have heard of a statue of Venus so cunningly framed, that as men came toward it, it seemed to smile, but as they turned from it, it seemed to frown. The things of this life are somewhat akin to the statue of Venus, as

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they come toward you they smile upon you, they are good ; but as you turn from them, or they from you, many times they frown, they look with another countenance. The next word is ‘ things, ‘ good things ;’ put a *beware* there too. Take heed how thou callest them *things* ; for indeed they are not things, but nothings. The last word is ‘ thy life ;’ *life*, put a *beware* there too. Take heed how thou call this present state of things ‘ thy ‘ life.’ Nature taught Euripides the poet to ask this question, ‘ Who knows whether to live be to die, ‘ and to die to live * ?’ But grace taught St. Paul to answer it, ‘ Now we live not, for our life is hid ‘ with Christ in God.’ Colof. iii. 3. So I return to resume the words again, and to consider a little more largely of them ; ‘ Take heed you receive ‘ not.’

What is this I hear ? Must I not receive the good things of this life ? If either right of patrimony and inheritance devolve them to me, or some casual providence of God cast them upon me, or my labour and industry woo and win them, must I bid defiance, and shut the doors against them ? Is this precept here like to the command of old Euclio in the comedy, who wills his servant to keep his doors shut, and open to none, no though good

* Τίς δ' οἶδεν εἰ ζῆν τῷδ', ὃ κέκληται θανάων.

Τὸ ζῆν δὲ θνήσκειν ἐστὶ ;

Euripid. apud Stobaeum.

fortune herself should come and knock*? Beloved, here I am in an uncertainty.

For answer to this question; it is reported of Aristippus the famous philosopher, that travelling over some parts of Afric, with his servants overladen with gold, when they complained of their burthen, and told him that they were so loaded, they should never reach their journey's end; he bad them lay down their burthens, and take up so much as they thought themselves conveniently enabled to bear, and leave the rest to the next that came that way†. From this example I draw my answer; Wouldst thou know whether thou shouldst receive the good things of the world? Try thy strength; art thou able to confront occasions, to converse amongst men, to wrestle with temptations, and take no foil? In a word, art thou able, with the three in Daniel, to go through the fire; and come out untouched? Do as Aristippus's servants did, take up thy gold, receive the blessings that offer themselves, entertain them, welcome them. On the contrary, art thou weak, or suspectest thou thy strength? will fears, or hopes, or pleasures over-master thee? canst thou not touch pitch but thou must be defiled with it? Then do as Aristippus's servants did, leave thy gold behind thee; these goodly glittering things, refuse them,

* Ne si bona quidem fortuna venerit.

† ——— servos projicere aurum

In mediâ jussit Lybiâ. Horat.

though they drop into thy lap. Briefly, two ways is this question answered: hast thou strength of mind? receive them; hast thou not? refuse them. The first is the wisest way, the second is the safest; He that receives them doth well, but he that receives them not doth better.

I will begin with the first; 'Receive them.' I know that this seems a riddle unto you, for my text seems to command you not to receive them; and I have told you, that one way to put this precept in use, is to receive them. This is true, receive them we may, but yet so as if we received them not. Many of the saints of God, yea Abraham himself, received large portions of the good of this world: and how then shall they, with Abraham himself, avoid this bitter exprobration, 'thou hast received,' but that some way or other even they that have received them, may justly be said not to have received them? Julius Caesar, when he had considered of his estate, and summed it up, and found for how great a sum he was in debt, beyond what he was worth, he merrily said, 'So much must I have, to have nothing †;' so much must I have that I may give every man his own, and myself have nothing. As Caesar found a way to have much, and yet to have nothing; so thou must find out a way to receive much at the hands of God, and yet have received nothing: for whatsoever it be that thou hast received from God,

† *Tantum me oportet habere ut nihil habeam.*

thou art but in debt for it, thou art but intrusted with it; look what it is thou hast, and say unto thyself as Caesar did, So much I have that I may have nothing. In debt, I say, thou art for all thou hast; and wilt thou know who are thy creditors? even every man that needs thee. The hungry man begs at thy gate, he is thy creditor, thou art in debt to him for his dinner: the naked man in the streets, he is thy creditor, thou art in debt to him for his garment: the poor oppressed prisoner, he is thy creditor, thou art in debt to him for his relief: the wronged captive, he is thy creditor, thou art in debt to him for his redemption. Be then like the widow's oil in the book of Kings, run as long as there is a vessel to receive thee; pay all these thy debts, and leave thyself nothing, and lo, thou hast found the wonderful art of receiving much at the hands of God, and yet receiving nothing. Had our rich man here done thus, he had never heard of this, 'thou hast received;' for, to receive here is not to take that which God offers, but to impropriate, to enjoy alone the gifts of God, either by dispending them on thyself, or thy vanities, or locking them up, and neither enjoying them thyself, nor suffering any other so to do; by making them 'thy good things,' and placing thy felicity in them; this is to receive. Thou sittest at thy full table, and crampest thyself with meats and drinks, whilst Lazarus starves at thy gate, 'thou hast received;' thou cladest thyself

with superfluous and gaudy apparel, whilst thy naked brother freezes in the street, 'thou hast received; thou refreshest thyself with dainty restoring physic, whilst the sick indeed perish for want of care, 'thou hast received.' Take heed, every vanity, every superfluity, every penny that thou hast mispent to the prejudice of him that wants, when the time comes, shall cry out unto thee, 'Thou hast received.' On the contrary, to have received, but not unto thyself, to have spent thyself for others good; he that doth thus, to him there can be no more objected a having received, than there can unto the sun that he received his beams, which he hath communicated to the world; or to the fountain, that it received it springs, where-with it hath watered the earth for which it was given.

Erewhile, when I considered the words in particular, I advised you to put a *beware* upon the word *thy*, 'thy good things:' for indeed, here is the ground of all abuse and error, that we take upon us to think and call any thing *ours*. For now we think, by and by we may infer, May we not do with our own what we list? We think we are not answerable to any one, no action of account lies against us, we fear no charge of having received. Beloved, there is more danger in the use of that word than you are aware of; *ours*, *mine*, is a gross, a crass, a secular term, easily taken up by worldlings, by better men not so easily. When Laban

had overtaken Jacob, and began to chide with him, 'These daughters,' saith he, 'are my daughters, these children are my children, these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou see'st is mine.' Gen. xxi. 43. Jacob had done enough to stile them his, he had bargained, he had served, he had watched, he had sweat, he had freezed for them; and yet he would not take up that word, nor count any thing his. Nabal, a man of the same letters, and of the same garb and quality with Laban, when David sent unto him to require relief of him, speaks in the same sibboleth; 'Shall I take,' saith he, 'my bread, and my water, and my flesh, which I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not?' 1 Sam. xxv. 11. Neither is it any wonder that they thus speak; for this is the language which they learned of their father, of their prince, of their god, even the prince which ruleth in the air, the god of this world, the devil; for he setting upon our Saviour in the gospel, courts him in the same manner; for, shewing him all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them, he tells him, 'All this is mine, and to whom I will, I give it*.' He lies, I doubt not, when he thus spake, (but that is no marvel) yea, and all those who take up the dialect, are no whit truer of their word. If the tongues of the children of light have sometimes tript that way, and fallen upon some of the same language, it is

* Alluding to Matth. iv. 9.

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but out of contagion, an error of conversation; such as befel Joseph, who conversing with the Egyptian courtiers, learned of them to swear by the life of Pharaoh: for, as walking in the sun discolors us, so walking in spiritual darkness will bring upon us swarth and blackness. But the sons of God, in their better thoughts, speak in another dialect: when David had, with great providence, with great hazard of person, treasured up much for the use of the house of the Lord, and was now come to dedicate it, and offer it up unto God, he dares not say, *mine*, but *thine*; 'out of thine own we present unto thee.' 1 Chron. xxix. 14. Now whereas the Holy Ghost is pleased here to use the phrase to the rich man, and call them 'thy good things,' this is but an irony and scorn; for, as they were originally, so still continue they to be God's, if abuse do not alter the property, for it is abuse only that makes them to be called *ours*: as the poet told his friend, 'The book, my friend, you read is mine; but if once you read it amiss, it is now *yours*, and no longer *mine**.' We read in the book of Joshua, that the gold and silver which was in Jericho was all God's, and was to be brought into his treasury; but when Achan had once purloined a part of it, and endeavoured to turn it to unlawful ends, God owns it no longer, but it is brought forth and burnt, and buried with

* Quem recitas meus est, ô Fidentine, libellus,
Sed male dum recitas incipit esse tuus. Mart.

him, and no more thought worthy to be employed in holy use. Parallel to this is there a notable example in St. Jerom; for he, writing of the monks of Egypt, reports of one of them, that labouring with his hands, and living without scandal, at length he dies; and when the brethren came to do their last duty to him, they found about him, as my author tells me, an hundred pieces of gold, which was of our money about fifty pounds; and musing much to find there such a sum, and long consulting what to do, at length they all agreed in this, they took the party and laid him in his grave, and laid his money by him, with this farewell, 'Thy money perish with thee †.' It seems therefore that things abused either to superfluity and wantonness, or to covetous and unprofitable ends, are no longer fit for God, or good men's service; therefore they perish with the abusers. Use them as God requires, and they remain still God's; thou hast not received them, they are not thine: abuse them once to folly or avarice, God owns them not; thou hast received them, and made them thy good things, by abusing them.

Yet that we may descend a little more particularly into this question of propriety, would thou know indeed what it is of which thou mayest justly say unto thyself, It is mine ‡? Examine thyself, find

† Argentum tuum tecum in perditionem. Epist. 18. ad Eustoch.

‡ Quod possis dicere jure, meum est.

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out thine own measure, so much as thou needest is *thine*, the rest thou art but entrusted withal for others good. That part of the beam of light which shines in thine eye is thine, all the rest is another's; that which thou eatest to suffice thine hunger is thine, all the rest is thy neighbour's; that water which thou drinkest of thy well is thine, all the rest is the property of the next comer. If thy barns and storehouses, thy wardrobes, thy treasuries, imprison and detain any thing, thou art but a common enemy, and offendest against a common profit. It is the bread of the hungry that thou detainest, it is the garment of the naked that thou lockest up in thy wardrobe, it is the shoe of the bare foot that rots by thee, it is the poor's money, and the talent of thy Lord, which thou hidest under the ground; look how many thou hast not furnished, so many hast thou wronged*. It is well that the providence of God hath left in common the light, the heat, the influence of heaven, and the water, and the air, patent unto all†; for, if some men had their will, even these should suffer inclosure and restraint, neither should we freely enjoy the benefit of light and air. For, I know not

* Τῷ πενώντός ἐστιν ὁ ἄρτος ὃν σὺ κατέχεις, τῷ γυμνιτούντος τὸ ἱμάτιον ὃ σὺ φυλάσσεις ἐν ἀποθήκαις, τῷ ἀνυποδῆτῃ τὸ ὑπόδημα ὃ παρὰ σοὶ κατασέπεται, τῷ χρῆζοντι τὸ ἀργύριον ὃ σὺ κατορύξας ἔχεις, ὥστε τοσούτοις ἀδίκῃς ὁσὺς παρέχειν ἰδύνατο. Basil. Hom. in Luc. xii. v. 18.

† — cunctis undamque auramque patentem.

how it falls out, that whereas there are two pages, two parts of every account, the receipt, and the expence, there is a reigning madness amongst men to increase their receipts, whilst, in the mean time, they are secure of their expence; whereas it is the expence that most concerns us; for what we shall receive is in the care and will of our master, but all our care and providence is seen in our expence. Now I know not how it comes to pass, that many seem to lessen the reputation of thrift and good husbandry with God, and therefore they treasure and lock up their receipts, as if they thought to clear their accounts, and save themselves from a charge of having received, by returning God his own again. But the account with God is in one circumstance very different from that with men; the steward that hath received his Lord's money, when he comes to his audit, if he repay what he hath not expended, he hath his acquittance, and all is well: but in our great audit with God there is no refunding, all must be dispended. Could we pay back again our Lord's money which we have not laid out, yet still the account depends, still we are in danger of a charge of having received; for nothing clears our accounts with God, but pariacion of expences with receipts; God's account must have no remain. Secular thrift is seen in saving, but divine thrift is best seen in spending: whether therefore thou spendest amiss, or whether thou savest amiss, thou art still liable to a charge of having received.

THE
D A N G E R
OF RECEIVING
OUR GOOD THINGS
IN
THIS LIFE.

Preached on Easter-day at Eaton-College.

Luke xvi. 25.

*Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivest
thy good things.*

SECOND SERMON ON THE TEXT.

I HAVE heard a proverb to this sound, ' He
' that hath a debt to pay at Easter, thinks the
' Lent but short : ' how short this Lent hath seem-
ed to me, who stand indebted to you for the re-
mainder of my meditations upon these words, is
no matter of consequence ; to you peradventure it
may have seemed so long, that what you lately
heard at Shrove-tide, now at Easter you may, with
pardon, have forgotten. I will therefore recall in-

to your memories so much of my former meditations, as may serve to open unto me a convenient way to pursue the rest of those lessons, which then, when I last spake unto you, the time and your patience would not permit me to finish. But ere I do this, I will take leave a little to fit my text unto this time of solemnity.

This time, you know, calls for a discourse concerning the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; of this you hear no sound in the words which I have read, and therefore you conclude it a text unbefitting the day. Indeed, if you take the resurrection for that glorious act of his omnipotency, by which, through the power of his eternal Spirit, he redeems himself from the hand of the grave, and triumphs over death and hell, you shall in these words find nothing pertinent; but if you take this resurrection for that act, by which, through the power of saving grace, Christ the sun of righteousness rises in our hearts, and raises us from the death of sin, unto the life of righteousness, here in these words you may, perchance, find a notable branch of it. For to raise our thoughts from this earth, and clay, and from things beneath, (and such are those which here Abraham calls, 'the good things of our life') and to set them above, where 'Christ sits at the right-hand of God,' Colos. iii. 1. this is that practic resurrection, which above all concerns us; that other of Christ in person, in regard of us, is

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but a resurrection in speculation; for to him that is dead in sin and trespasses, and who places his good in the things of this life, Christ is, as it were, not risen at all; to such a one he is still in the grave, and under the bands of death: but to him that is risen with Christ, and seeks the good things that are above, to him alone is Christ risen: to know and believe perfectly the whole story of Christ's resurrection, what were it, if we did not practise this resurrection of our own? God will not reckon with thee, how much thou knowest, but how well thou hast lived *. Epictetus, that great philosopher, makes this pretty parable, Should a shepherd, saith he, call his sheep to account how they had profited, would he like of that sheep, which brought before him his hay, his grafs, and fodder; or rather that sheep, which having well digested all these, exprest himself in fat, in flesh, and wool †? Beloved, you are the flock of Christ, and the sheep of his hands; should the great Shepherd of the flock call you before him, to see how you have profited, would he content himself with this, that you had well conned your Catechism, that you had diligently read the Gospel, and exactly knew the whole story of the resurrection? would it not give him better satisfaction to find Christ's resurrection exprest in your's, and as it

* Cogita non exacturum à te Deum, quantum cognoveris, sed quantum vixeris.

† Epictet, Encheir. c. 42.

were digested into flesh and wool? To have read Chrysippus his book, this is not virtue *: To have read the Gospel, to have gathered all the circumstances of the resurrection of Christ, this is not Christianity: to have risen, as Christ hath done, so to have digested the resurrection of Christ, as that we have made it our own, this is rightly to understand the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ. For this cause have I refused to treat this day of that resurrection, in the doctrine of which I know you are perfect, and have reflected on that, in the knowledge of which I fear you are imperfect: which that I might the better do, I have made choice to prosecute my former meditations, begun when I last spake unto you in this place; for so doing, I shall open unto you one of the hardest points of your spiritual resurrection, even to raise your thoughts from the things of this life, and seat them with Christ above.

To make my way more fair to this, I will take leave to put you in mind, in short, how I proceeded in the opening of these words, when I last spake unto you out of this place: you may be pleased to remember, that after some instruction drawn from the first word, *son*, I proceeded to consider the ensuing words, wherein having by an alchimy, which then I used, changed the word *remember* into *beware*; and so read my text thus,

* Οὐ γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς τῆς ἐστὶ, Χρυσίππου ἀνέκδοτον.

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' Beware thou receive not thy good things in this
' life,' I shewed you, that we had never greater
cause to consult our best wits, what we are to do,
and how we are to carry ourselves, than when the
world, and outward blessings come upon us; upon
this I moved this question, Whether or no, if the
things of this world should, by some providence
of God, knock and offer themselves to us, are we
bound to exclude them and refuse them? or, might
we open and admit of them? I divided my answer
according to the divers abilities and strengths of
men: First, he that hath strength and spiritual
wisdom to manage them, let him receive them;
but in the second place, he that is weak, let him
let strong diet alone, and feed on herbs, let him
not intangle himself with more than he can ma-
nage; let him try what his strength can endure,
what not *. To the first, the sum of what I spake
was this, Receive them we may, and that without
danger of an exprobration for having received;
first, if we so received them, as if we received them
not; secondly, if we esteemed them not good;
thirdly, if we did not esteem them ours: and here
the time cut me off, and suffered me not to de-
scend unto the *second* part, upon which now I am
about to fall, ' Take heed thou receive not thy
' good things.'

In this matter of receiving and entertaining
these outward and foreign good things, there have

* — quid valeant humeri, quid ferre recusant. Horat.

been two ways commended to you, the one the more glorious, to receive them; of this we have spoken. The other the more safe, not to receive them; of this we are now to speak. These ways are trodden by two kinds of persons; the one is the strong man, and more virtuous; the other is weaker, but more cautelous; the one encounters temptation, the other avoids it: we may compare them to the two great captains, Hannibal and Fabius, the one ever calling for the battle, the other evermore declining it. In one of these two ranks must every good man be found; if we compare them together, we shall find, that the one is far more excellent, the other far more in number: for to be able to meet and check our enemy, to encounter occasions, to act our parts in common life upon the common stage, and yet to keep our uprightness; this indeed is truly to live, truly to serve God and men, and therefore God the more, because men. On the contrary to avoid occasions, to follow that other kind of victory which is attained by declining the combat*, to overcome the world by contemning and avoiding it, this argues a wise indeed, but a weak and fainting spirit: I have often wondered at antiquity, which doting extremely upon a sequestered, a solitary, retired, and monkish life, sticks not to give out, that all perfection is in it, whereas indeed there is no greater argument of imperfection in good men,

* Vincendi genus, non pugnare.

than not to be able to endure the sun and the croud *; not to be able, without offence, to walk the public ways, to entertain the common occasions, but to live only to God and to themselves: men of no great public use, but excellent for themselves †; saints indeed in private, but being called forth into common life, are like bats in the sun, utterly ignorant of public practice; like Scheubelius a great mathematician, but by book only, and not by practice, who being required sometime in an army to make use of his quadrant, knew not the difference between *umbra recta* and *umbra versa*: yet, beloved, because this kind of good men is by far the greatest in number; and secondly, because it is both an usual and a dangerous error of many men, to pretend to strength, when they are but weak, and so forgetting their place, range themselves among the first, whereas they ought to have kept station among the second sort, I will take leave both to advise myself, and all that hear me, to like better of the safer, though the weaker side, and to avoid the exprobration of having received here in my text, simply by not receiving, not admitting at all of the outward, lower, and temporal good things, rather than by an improvident fool-hardiness to thrust ourselves upon occasions which we are unable to manage without offence. This I am the more wil-

* *Quam non posse pati solem, non multitudinem.*

† *Utilis ipse sibi fortassis, inutilis orbi.*

ling to do, because there is not among men a greater error committed, and more frequent, than in this kind; for in most things in the world, men that have no skill in them, will be content to acknowledge their ignorance, and to give place to better experience: should we put the discussion of some point of scholarship to the plough-hind, or a case in law to the physician, or a point in physic to the lawyer, none of these will offer to interpose, but will advise to consult with every one in his proper mystery; but let offer be made of moneys, lands, places of honour and preferment, and who will excuse himself, who will acknowledge his ignorance, or weakness to manage them? Whereas in all the arts and sciences there are not so many errors committed, as in the unskilful use of these things, and yet our errors are no where so dangerous: it is therefore a thing most necessary, that in this behalf we advise men, either to know their weakness, or to suspect their strength; better to be cautelous and wary, than strong and hardy; the strong man hath been often captivated, but the wary man very seldom*. We read in many places of Moses and Samuel, of a race of men greater in bulk and stature than the ordinary men, unto whom men of common inches seemed but as grasshoppers; such were the Anakims, the Enims, the Horims, the Zamzummims, the Re-

* *Malo cautior esse quam fortior; fortis saepe captus est, cautus rarissime.*

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phaims, and the like : but if you read the scriptures, you shall find it observed unto your hand, that the men of lesser bodies always drove them out ; if you demand the reason, experience will answer you, that the one went upon the opinion of strength and hardiness, the other of wary wit and policy : it fares no otherwise with these two orders of men, of which I have spoken, there is the Anakim, the man that goes forth in the conceit of his strength and valour ; there is the man of mean stature, whose strength is his wariness ; were there a survey taken of both these, it would be found, that more by far have perished by unadvised adventuring upon the things of this world, than by discreet and sober retiring.

Wherefore, dost thou find that thou comest on, and thriveest in the world ? that the good things of this world woo thee, and cast themselves into thy lap ? that wealth, that honours, that abundance waits upon thee ? take heed how thou presume of thy strength to manage them, look well upon them, and see if there be not written on the fore-head of every one of them, ' thou hast received.' But, Beloved, I perceive I deceive myself, for these gay things of the world carry not their exprobration of having received in their fore-heads ; as they come towards us, they are smooth and fair : you can prognosticate nothing by their countenance but serene and Summer weather : our great master Aristotle hath told us, That if our

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pleasures did look upon us when they come to us, as they do when they turn their back and leave us, we would never entertain them ; these goodly things have their exprobration of having received written in their back ; it is never discovered till it be too late to mend it, when death summons us, when the world, the flesh, the glory and pomp of life turns its back and leaves us, then shall you read ' thou hast received. *Beware* therefore, presume not, but be wary ; and that thou mayest avoid a charge for having received, be sure that thou receive not : how many of those, think you, who out of their opinion of skill and strength, have given free entertainment to the world, have made large use of the world, lived abundantly, fared costly, dwelt sumptuously, clothed themselves richly, when their time and hour came, would rather have gone out of some poor cottage, than out of a princely palace, and lived with no noise in the world, that so they might have died in some peace ? See you not, what some great persons in the church of Rome have often done ? Charles V, the Prince of Parma, fundry others, though they lived in all pomp and state, yet at their death they desired to be buried in a poor Capuchin's hood ; miserable men ! If to die in a state of perfect sequestration from the world were so precious, so available a thing ; how much more precious, more available had it been to live in it ! For thus to die, not having thus lived, is nothing else but to give

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sentence against their own life; for we shall not appear before God as we died, but as we lived. To profess hate and desertion of the world at our death, as most do; to put on humiliation at our death, that live at ease and in state all our life; this is but to be buried in a Capuchin's hood: What is it, Beloved, that thus reforms our judgment, and clears our sight at that hour? Nothing but this, all our pleasures, all our honours, all the May-games of our life, they now shall shew themselves unto us, and every one cry out unto us, 'Thou hast received thy good things.'

Now, Beloved, that I may a little the better strengthen, with good reason, this my advice of retiring from, and rejecting, the goodly things of the world, give me leave a little to consult with my topics, and to try out of what place I may draw some arguments to bring you on the easier.

And *first* of all, were there no other reason to persuade you, yet the very reading of this story, where I have taken my text, would afford arguments enough; for what meant Abraham, I beseech you, when he told the rich man, he had received his good things? Did he use some obscure and unknown phrase, which no circumstance of the story could open? It stands not with the goodness of the Holy Ghost, to tell us of our danger in unknown language; something therefore certainly we shall find to open the meaning: cast back your eye upon the description of the person, whom

Abraham charges with this error, and see if you find not a paraphrase there; the man to whom this phrase is applied, is described by the properties, of which I understand not that any one is a virtue; first, it is said, he was rich; secondly, he wore scarlet and soft linen; thirdly, he was jovial, and feasted liberally every day: doth not this accurate description of the person shew his error? For to what other purpose else could this description serve? Either here is his error, or this character is in vain; it seems therefore we must conclude, that to be rich, to cloath ourselves costly, to fare deliciously, thus to do, is 'to receive the good 'things in our life,' except some favourable interpretation do help us out; but we must take heed how we do dally with, and elude, scripture by interpretations; as it is written so do thou understand*. When St. John describes the world, which he forbids us to follow, he makes three parts of it, 'the lust of the flesh, the lust of the 'eye, and the pride of life.' 1 John ii. 16. Do not all these three appear here in the character of our man? Where is 'the lust of the eye,' if it be not in gaudy apparel? Where is 'the lust 'of the flesh,' at least one great branch of it, if it be not in the use of dainty diet? Where is 'the pride of life,' if not in riches? And what reason have you now to doubt, what should be

* Νομίζω ὅτι γ' ὑπαρτάς. Basil. Hom. ix. de Terrestribus. §. 1.

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the meaning of 'thou hast received thy good things?' He then that fears to hear an exprobration for having received, if he be rich, let him not forget to distribute, and empty those bags which lie up by him; if he be costly clad, let him turn his scarlet into sackcloth; if he feed deliciously, let him turn his costly dishes into temperance and fasting: otherwise, what can we plead for ourselves, that we should not, as well as this man in my text, when our time comes, hear our doom, 'thou hast received?'

But I see what it is, peradventure, that troubles you; you will ask me, Whether I will avouch it to be a sin to be rich? I must walk warily, lest I lay myself open to exception: Pelagius grounding himself upon that of our Saviour, 'It is impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven,' taught that lesson indeed, as the words do lie, and would by no means grant that a rich man could be saved; but for this the church noted him for an heretic; for among his heresies this is scored up for one, together with that, that it is not lawful to swear; but if Pelagius had never otherwise erred, the church might very well have pardoned him that heresy. Many times it falls out, by the reason of the hardness of our hearts, that there is more danger in pressing some truths, than in maintaining some errors: that it is lawful sometime to sport ourselves, that it is lawful to feast at Christmas, that it is lawful to swear, and many other

things of the like nature, are all truths; yet there is no necessity we should press them in our sermons to the people, for there is no fear the people will ever forget these; better to labour that they do not too much remember them*; he that will labour in repressing the abuses, which people ground upon these truths, must remember the old rule, 'Seek what is not thy due, that thou mayest receive what is †;' he must go very near to teach for truth the contrary falsehood. To return then from this digression to our rich man; Pelagius, I grant, was deceived, when he shut all rich men out of the kingdom of heaven: but suppose we that he had prevailed in this doctrine, that he had wrought all the world to this bent, that the church had received it for catholic doctrine, shew me, he that can, what inconvenience would have attended this error? If every rich man should suddenly become liberal, and disburse his moneys where his charity directed him; if every painted gallant did turn his peacocks feathers into sackcloth; if every glutton left his full dishes, and betook himself to temperance and fasting, yea, and thought himself in conscience bound so to do, out of fear, lest he might hear of 'thou hast received;' I persuade myself the state of Greece would never suffer the more for this, but the state of Christianity would have thrived the more. Well had it been for our

* Cavendum est ne nimium meminerint.

† Iniquum petendum est, ut æquum feras.

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rich man here, if he had been a Pelagian; for this point of Pelagianism is the surest remedy, that I know, against an exprobration of having received; whereas, on the contrary side, by reason of the truth, many rich and covetous persons flatter themselves in their sin, whereof they die well conceited, from which they had been freed, had it been their good fortune to have been thus far deceived, and been Pelagians. Let men therefore either quite refuse riches, if they offer themselves, which is the advice I give, or if they will give them acceptance, let them believe, that if they be rich, they may be saved; but let them so live, as if they could not; for the one shall keep them from error in their faith, the other from sin in their actions.

A *second* reason, persuading us to the neglect of these so much admired things of the world, is the consideration of certain abuses, which they put upon us, certain fallacies, and false glosses, by which they delude us; for I know not how, the world hath cried them up, and hath given them goodly titles*; men call them blessings, and favours, and rewards, and think those men most blest of God, who enjoy most of them; these goodly titles serve for nothing, but to set men on longing after them, and so fill those that have them with false persuasions, and those that have them not with despair and

* Ut vel lactis gallinacei sperare possis haustum, as *Pliny speaks*, Hist. Nat. lib. i. c. 2.

discontents. Were they indeed blessings, were they rewards, then were our case very ill, and we ourselves in greater danger of the sentence, 'thou hast received,' than before: for as Abraham here tells the man of, 'thou hast received thy good things,' so our Saviour tells, more than once, of some who have their reward; if then we shall beg, and receive these things at the hands of God, as a reward of our service, we shall be no more able, when we come to appear before our God, to shelter ourselves from an 'thou hast had thy reward,' you have your reward, then the rich man here could defend himself from a 'thou hast received thy good things.' They may indeed pass for rewards, and blessings, and that truly too, but to a sad and disconsolate end; for there is no man, though never so wicked, but that some way or other doth some good, some cup of cold water hath been given, some small service enterprized even by the worst of men: now God, who leaves no service unrewarded, no good office unrespected, therefore preserves these sublunary blessings of purpose to clear accounts with men here, who otherwise might seem to claim something at his hand at that great day. It is the question Ahasuerus makes, 'What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this?' Est. vi. 3. God is more careful of his honour than Ahasuerus was; none more careful than he to reward every service with some honour: Nebuchadnezzar was no saint,

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I trow, yet because of his long service in the subduing of Tyre, God gives him Egypt for his reward, they are the prophet Ezekiel's words, xxix. 20. when therefore thou seest God willing to bring the world upon thee, to enrich thee, to raise thee to honours, as Tertullian saith, 'Be jealous of 'this courtesy of God*;' or rather cry out with St. Bernard, 'O Lord, I will none of this kind of 'mercy†:' for how knowest thou whether he reward not thee, as he did Nebuchadnezzar, only to even accounts with thee, and shew thee that he is not in thy debt, that thou mayest hear at the last either a 'thou hast received,' or 'thou hast thy reward?' 'O how great a reward,' saith St. Jerom, 'might many men receive at the hand of 'God, if they did not anticipate their reward, and 'desire it in this life‡?' Why do we capitulate with him for our services? Why not rather, out of pious ambition, desire to have God in our debt? He that doth God the greatest service, and receives here from him the least reward, is the happiest man in the world. There goes a story of Aquinas, that praying once before the crucifix, the crucifix miraculously speaks thus unto him, 'Thou hast 'written well of me, Thomas, what reward dost 'thou desire?' To whom Aquinas is made to an-

* *Suspectam habe hanc Domini indulgentiam.*

† *Misericordiam hanc nolo, Domine.*

‡ *O quanta apud Deum merces, si in praesenti praemium non sperarent. Epist. 34. ad Nepotianum.*

swer, 'No reward, Lord, but thyself*.' It is great pity this tale is not true, it doth so excellently teach what to ask of God for our reward in his service. Let God but assure thee of this reward, thou mayest very well pardon him all the rest. Let us therefore amend our language, and leave off these solecisms, and misapplied denominations of blessings, and favours, and rewards, names too high for any thing under the moon, and at our leisure find out other names to express them; as for this great esteem which we make of the things below, it comes but from this, that we know not the value of things above; did we believe ourselves to be the heirs and the sons of God, and knew the price of our inheritance in heaven, it could no be that we should harbour so high and honourable conceits of earthly things. It is a famous speech of Martin Luther, 'Did a man indeed believe that he is a son and heir unto God, it could not be that such a man should long live, but forthwith he would be swallowed up, and die of immoderate joy†. And certainly either our not believing, or not rightly valuing the things of God, or howsoever, not knowing them, is the cause of this our languishing, and impatient

* Bene de me scripsisti, Thoma, quam ergo mercedem accipies?—Nullam, Domine, praeter teipsum.

† Homo perfecte credens se esse haeredem et filium Dei, non diu superstes maneret, sed statim immodico gaudio absorberetur.

longing after earthly things. It is but a plain comparison which I shall use, yet because it fits the person to whom I will apply it, and because it is Theophylact's in his comments on St. Luke's Gospel, I will not be ashamed to make use of it; 'Swine, saith he, have their eyes so framed, that they cannot look up to heaven; their keepers, therefore, when they find themselves troubled with their crying, are wont to cast them upon their backs, and so make them cease their crying; for that beast being amazed to see the frame and beauty of heaven, which before he had never seen, being stricken with admiration, forgets his crying*:' the eyes of many men seem to be framed like those of swine, they are not able to cast them up to heaven; for would they but cast themselves upon their backs, turn their face from earth, and view the beauty of things above, it could not be, but all this claim, or rather clamour after earthly things should utterly cease.

Again, (yet the more to quicken one to the neglect of these things below) among many other fallacies, by which they delude us, I have made

* Τὸ χοῖρον γὰρ οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ἰδέσθαι τὰ ἄνω βλέπων δύναται, ἀλλοκότῃ διαπλάσει τυχόντες. ὅθεν ἔοι χοιροβοσκοὶ ἐπειδὴν χοῖρον κατέχοντες, ὃ δύναται παύειν αὐτὸν βοῶντα, ἀναστρέφοντες ὑπτίον, μετρίωτιρον αὐτὸν πάθει βοᾶν. οἰονεὶ γὰρ ὡς θῖαν ἰλθὼν ὃν ἔν ἰδέσθαι, ἔ τὰ ἄνω βλέπων ἐκπλήττεται, ἔ σιγᾷ. τοῦτο οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ τῶν τοῖς φαύλοις ἐντρυφομένων, ἰδέσθαι τὰ ἄνω ὀρῶσι.
Theophylact, in Lucam. c. xv.

choice of one more: they present themselves unto us, sometimes as necessities, sometimes as ornaments unto us in our course of virtue and happiness; whereas they are but mere impertinences, neither is it any way material whether we have them, yea or no: 'Virtue and happiness require 'nothing else but a man*:' thus says the Ethnics, and Christianity much more: for it were a strange thing that we should think, that Christ came to make virtue more chargeable: in regard of virtue and piety, all estates, all conditions, high and low, are alike. It is noted by Petronius for the vanity of rich men; 'Those men, whose minds are set 'upon wealth and riches, would have all men believe that it is best so to do †.' But riches and poverty make no difference, for we believe him that hath told us, 'there is no difference, Jew and 'Gentile, high and low, rich and poor, all are one 'in Christ Jesus.' Galat. iii. 28. Colos. iii. 11. St. Ambrose saith, 'Poverty, as men call it, is but 'a fancy ‡; there is no such thing indeed, it is but a figment, an idol; men first framed and set it up, and afterwards feared it; as some naturalists tell us, that the rainbow is a thing framed only by the eye:

* *Virtus non eligit domum nec censum, nudo homine contenta est.* Senec. de Benef. lib. iii. c. 18.

† *Qui solas divitias extruere curant, nihil volunt inter homines melius credi, quam quod ipsi tenent.* Satyr. c. 84.

‡ *Non naturae paupertas, sed opinionis est.* Epist. Clav. l. 63. §. 20.

so this difference betwixt rich and poor is but the creature of the eye. Smyndyrides the Sybarite was grown so extremely dainty, that he would grow weary with the sight of another man's labour, and therefore when sometime he saw a poor man digging, and painfully labouring, he began to faint and pant, and required to be removed*. Beloved, when we are thus offended to see another man meanly clad, meanly housed, meanly traded, all this is but out of a Sybaritish ridiculous daintiness, for all this is but to grow weary at the sight of another man's labour; would we follow our Saviour's precept, and put out this eye of ours, the greatest part of all this vanity were quite extinguished; for what were all outward state and pomp imaginable, were no eye to see or regard it?

Now, Beloved, yet to see this more plainly, what is the main end of our life? what is it, at which, with so much pain and labour, we strive to arrive? It is, or should be nothing else but virtue and happiness: now these are alike purchasable in all estates; poverty, disease, distress, contumely, contempt; these are as well the object of virtue as wealth, liberty, honour, reputation, and the rest of that forespoken rank: happiness therefore may as well dwell with the poor, miserable, and distressed persons, as with persons

* Athen. lib. xii. 3. Senec. de Ira. lib. ii. c. 25.

of better fortune, since it is confest by all, that happiness is nothing else but a leading of our life according to virtue. As great art may be exprest in the cutting of a flint, as in the cutting of a diamond, and so the workman do well exprest his skill, no man will blame him for the baseness of the matter, or think the worse of his work: Beloved, some man hath a diamond, a fair and glittering fortune; some man hath a flint, a hard, harsh, and despicable fortune; let him bestow the same skill and care in polishing and cutting of the latter, as he would or could have done on the former, and be confident it will be as highly valued (if not more highly rewarded) by God, who is no acceptor of persons, but 'accepteth every man according to that he hath, and not according to that he hath not.' 2 Cor. viii. 12. To him let us commit ourselves: To him be all honour and praise, now and for ever. Amen.

ST. PETER'S FALL.

Matth. xxvi. 75.

And he went forth, and wept bitterly.

THUS to commit to writing, as here our Evangelist hath done, and so to lay open to all posterity the many slips and errors which have much blemished and disgraced the lives and actions of the best and most excellent men, may seem, in the judgment of a reasonable man, to participate of much envy and uncharitableness: so that their good life had remained upon record for our example, we might very well have suffered their errors to have slept and been buried with their bodies in their graves. St. Peter makes it the property of charity to 'hide the multitude of sins;' 1 Pet. iv. 8. whose property then is it thus to blazon them at mid-day, and to fill the ears of the world with the report of them? Constantine, the first-born among Christian Emperors, so far misliked this course, that he professed openly, if he found any of his bishops and clergy, whom it especially concerned to have a reputation pure and spotless, committing any grievous sin, to hide it from the eye of the world,

he would cover it with his own garment; he knew well that which experience had long ago observed, 'Things well said, well done, do nothing so much profit and further us, as the examples of ill speeches, ill actions, do mischief and inconvenience us*:' and men are universally more apt from the errors and escapes of good men to draw apologies for their own, than to propose their good deeds for examples and patterns for themselves to follow. Neither is this my own speculation, St. Austin observed it long since, who discoursing upon the fall of David, complains, that from his example, many framed unto themselves this apology, 'If David did thus, then why not I? Thou dost (saith he) prepare thy heart to sin; thou providest thyself of purpose; thou dost look into the book of God, even therefore that thou mightest sin; the scriptures of God thou dost therefore hear, that by the example of those that fell, thou mayest learn to do that which is displeasing unto God †.' Yea, the greater is the person offending, the more dangerous is the example; for greatness is able of itself, as it were, to legitimate foul acts, to add authority and credit unto ill doings. Whosoever he be, saith Seneca

* Non tam juvare quae bene dicta sunt, quam nocere quae pessime.

† Si David, cur non et ego? Praeparas te ad peccandum, disponis peccare; librum Dei ut pecces inspicias; scripturas Dei ad hoc audis, ut facias quod displicet Deo.

of Cato, 'that objects drunkenness to Cato, shall
 'more easily prove drunkenness to be a virtue,
 'than that Cato, who used it, was to blame *.'
 When St. Peter, Galat. ii. 13. had halted in his
 behaviour betwixt the Gentiles and those of the
 circumcision, St. Paul notes, that many of the
 Jews, yea 'Barnabas himself, was carried away
 'with their dissimulation:' and to speak truth,
 whom would not the authority and credit of St.
 Peter have drawn into an error? So easily the
 faults of great men grow up and become exempla-
 ry, and so full of hazard is it, to leave unto the
 world a memorial of the errors and scapes of wor-
 thy persons. Yet notwithstanding all this, the Ho-
 ly Spirit of God, who bringeth light out of dark-
 ness, and worketh above and against all means,
 hath made the fall of his saints an especial means
 to raise his church: and therefore hath it pleased
 him, by the penmen of the lives of his saints in
 holy scripture, to lay open in the view of the
 world many gross faults and imperfections, even
 of the most excellent instruments of his glory.
 That which he tells the woman in the gospel,
 who anointed him before his passion, that 'where-
 'soever the gospel shall be preached, this fact of
 'hers should be recorded in memorial of her:'
 Matth. xxvi. 13. the same, as it seems, was his

* Catoni ebrietas objecta est: at facilius efficiet, quisquis
 objecerit, hoc crimen honestum, quàm turpem Catonem. Se-
 neca de Tranquil. Anim. 15.

intent concerning his faints; that whereſoever the word of life ſhould be taught, there likewiſe ſhould be related the grievous ſins of his ſervants. And therefore accordingly, ſcarcely is there any one faint in the whole book of God, who is not recorded in one thing or other to have notably overſhot himſelf. Sometimes he hath made the faints themſelves the proclaimers of their own ſhame: ſo he makes Moſes to regiſter his own infidelity; ſo David in his one and fiftieth pſalm, by the inſtinct of God's Spirit, leaves unto the church, under his own hand, an evidence againſt himſelf for his adultery and murder: ſometimes he makes their deareſt friends the moſt exact chroniclers of their faults; for ſo St. Chryſoſtom obſerves of St. Mark, the companion and ſcholar of St. Peter, who hath more particularly regiſtered the fall of his maſter, than any of the other Evangelists, 'Who would not marvel,' ſaith he, 'that St. Mark not only concealed not the groſs eſcape of his maſter; but hath more accurately than any of the reſt recorded the particulars of it, even becauſe he was his diſciple*;' as if he could have done his maſter no better ſervice, than to deliver a moſt exact relation of his fault. There are yet two things further to be noted in this diſpenſation of Almighty God; the firſt, in regard of us;

* Οὐκ ἔστιν μάλας ἂν τις αὐτὸν ἐκπλαγοῖ, ὅτι ὁ μόνον ἐκ ἑκρυψε τὸ ἱλάττωμα, ἀλλὰ ὁ, τῶν ἄλλων ſαφίτερον ἀπήγγειλεν, αὐτῷ τῷ μαθητῇ. Hom. 86.

the second, in regard of the saints, whose errors are recorded: for the first, who can but marvel, that since all things that are written, are written for our instruction; that if they be good, they may serve for our imitation; if otherwise, for warning to us: yet, many sinister actions of the saints of God are so exprest in scripture, without censure, without note, that it were almost some danger to pronounce of them? Abraham's equivocating with Abimelch, Jacob's deluding his blind father, Rachel abusing Laban with a lie, Jephthah his sacrificing his daughter, Sampson killing himself with the Philistines; these, and many other besides, are so set down, that they may seem to have been done rather by divine instinct, than out of human infirmity. Wherein the Holy Ghost seems to me to set upon us out of ambush, to use a kind of guile, to see whether we have spiritual discretion, to try whether we will attribute more to men's examples, than to his precepts. Secondly, in regard of the saints themselves: it is worth our noting, that God seems to have had more care to discredit them, than to honour them, in that their faults are many times particularly registered, but their repentance is wrapt up in silence; so the story of Noah is concluded with his drunkenness; after the report of Lot's incest, there is not a word of him throughout the scriptures; as soon as the story of Solomon's idolatry is related, it immediately follows in the text, 'and Solomon slept with

'his fathers.' 1 Kings xi. 43. We should very much wrong these men, if we should think that they past out of this life without repentance, because their repentance is concealed. Doubtless if we were worthy to search the mysteries of the Spirit, we should find that the Holy Ghost hath left something for our instruction even in this particular; for nothing in scripture is done by chance: but, as St. Chrysostom is wont sometime to tell his auditory, that he will not resolve all doubts, but leave some to meditate on by themselves; so will I now deal with you, I will leave this to your private considerations, to practise your wits in the depths of Christianity, and so to frame reasons unto yourselves of this proceeding of the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament, the Holy Ghost constantly holds the same course of relating the fall of the saints: and so accordingly by all the four Evangelists sets down at large, the fearful sin of St. Peter in denying and forswearing his master. But as it pleased him in mercy to give him repentance, so in these words which I have read unto you, hath it pleased him to leave unto the church a memorial of it. Our first note therefore, before we come to the words, shall be a note of that exceeding use and profit, which hath redounded to the church by the registering of St. Peter's repentance; for this is done by the Holy Ghost, to signify unto us the necessity and force of repentance, and sorrow for sin. The concealing of Solomon's

reclaim hath occasioned some, upon acknowledgment of the necessity of repentance, to suppose that Solomon past away without it, and so received the final reward of the impenitent. But he that should have read this story of St. Peter, and observed what authority he had afterwards, what especial favour our Saviour did him after his resurrection, notwithstanding his fall, if the manner of his recovery had not been recorded, might easily have entertained a conceit very prejudicial to repentance. Who might not hope to regain the favour of God without shedding a tear, if St. Peter, notwithstanding so grievous a crime, without repentance, should again be reconciled? We might therefore, with excuse, have presumed upon a non-necessity of repentance, as if it had been enough in case of sin to practise that which common morality teaches, barely to relinquish it, without any more ado. *That* therefore which we learn by this registering of St. Peter's repentance, is this, That for the clearing of a Christian man's account unto God, it is not sufficient barely to cease from doing ill, to satisfy the law which we broke, either with our life, or with our goods; to make recompence to our neighbour for wrong done him; all this and much more washes not away the guilt of sin before God. These are things which the very light of nature teaches us to do. It was not to be thought that David to his former adulteries and murder, would have added new: he that hath

been forced to restore fourfold that which he had taken away by stealth, will, peradventure, take warning to steal no more: but this doth not suffice him: there is a further duty, a duty of repentance required of every Christian man, a duty proper to him alone. For this doctrine of repentance Nature never taught in her school, neither was it ever found in the books of the learned; it is particular to the Book of God, and to the doctrine that came down from heaven. In the sins against the first table we offend immediately and only against God; but in the sins against the second table, there is a double guilt contracted, one against God, another against our neighbour; in these sins, as there is a double fault, so there is a double satisfaction to be made, one unto God, another to our neighbour: for this second satisfaction between man and man, many Heathen commonwealths have been very sufficiently furnished with store of excellent laws; but of an atonement, over and above, to be made to God, they scarce seem to have had any thought: and indeed to speak truth, to what purpose had it been to trouble their heads about it? it is impossible that it should ever fall within the conceit of any reasonable creature, to pronounce what satisfaction was to be made for offence committed against God: he is of infinite majesty, holding no proportion, no correspondence, with any created being; what recompence then can he receive

from the hands of dust and ashes? Ten thousand worlds, were we able to give them all, could not make satisfaction for any part of the smallest offence we have committed against him: when therefore the inventions of men were thus at a stand, when all discourse, all reason were posed, it pleased God in mercy to open his pleasure in his word, and to accept of true and unfeigned repentance, as the only means to wash away the guilt of sin against his majesty: a thing in the eye of flesh and blood altogether ridiculous. And therefore Julian, that accursed apostate, scorning Constantine the Emperor for betaking himself to the Christian religion, in contempt and derision of baptism and repentance, thus speaks: 'Ho, whosoever is a corrupter and a defiler of women, whosoever is a manslayer, whosoever is an impure and unclean person, let him from henceforth be secure, and care for nothing; I will shew him a little water, in which, if he do but dip himself, he shall be forthwith clean: yea, though he desperately run again into the same crimes, I will give him this gift, if he but knock his breast and strike his forehead (which are the gestures of the penitent) he shall, without any more adoe, become as pure as glass *.' It is true indeed, in

* Οστις φθορεὺς, ὅστις μαιφόνος, ὅστις ἑναγὴς ἔβδελυρὸς, ἴτω βαπτισμῶν, ἀποφανῶ γὰρ αὐτὸν τῷ τῷ ὕδατι λύσας, αὐτίκα καθαρὸν. καὶ πάλιν ἐνέχος τοῖς αὐτοῖς γίνεται, δώσω τὸ σῆθος πλύξαι, καὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν πατάξαι, καθαρῶ γινώσθαι. *Caesares: in sin.*

spight of unbelieving miscreants, it hath pleased God, through the foolishness of baptism and repentance, to save those that are his. The water of baptism and the tears of true repentance, creatures of themselves weak and contemptible, yet, through the wonderful operation of the grace of God annex unto them, are able, were our sins as red as twice-died scarlet, to make them as white as snow. The sentence of God denounced unto Adam, 'What day thou eatest of the tree, thou shalt die,' Gen. ii. 17. certainly was absolute and irrevocable, neither could any repentance of Adam's totally have reversed it: yet Abulensis cries out, 'O how happy should mankind have been, if Adam after his fall had used the benefit of repentance, and in time acknowledged his sin unto God:' yea, he goes further, and seems to intimate, that it had been of force almost to restore us unto our primitive purity; for this way his words seem to look, when he saith, 'If he had accused himself, doubtless he had freed us all from accusation and a curse *:' whatsoever his meaning was, thus much without danger we may think, that if our first parents had not so strangely shuffled their fault from the one to the other, the man to the

* Quod si seipsum accusasset, nos omnes ab accusatione et judicio liberasset.

By Abulensis is meant Alphonso Toftatus bishop of Avila in Spain. The editor has had no opportunity of consulting the writings of this voluminous author.

woman, the woman to the serpent; but had freely acknowledged it, and humbly begged pardon for it, God, whose mercies were then as many and as ready as now they are, would, if not altogether have revoked, yet doubtless much have qualified and mitigated the sentence of the curse; if Adam had used more ingenuity in confessing, God would have used less rigour in punishing. Out of all this I draw this one lesson for your instruction; Whosoever he be that thinks himself quit of some sins into which, either through weakness or carelessness, he hath fallen, let him not presently flatter himself, as if for this his book of debt unto God were cancelled, as if he were in a state of grace and new birth; but let him examine his own conscience, and impartially sift all the manner of his reclaim: he may, peradventure, find that, upon some moral respect, he hath broken off the practice of his sin; he may find that he hath satisfied his neighbour, contented the law, done many acts by which he hath purchased reconciliation with the world: but, if he find not this passage of repentance and hearty sorrow betwixt God and his own soul, let him know, that God is yet unsatisfied, that he is yet in his sin; his sin is yet unrepented of, and therefore still remains.

Thus from the necessity of registering St. Peter's repentance, I come to the words wherein it is registered, 'And he went forth, and wept bitterly.' In these words we will consider four things;

First, the person, *he*, 'He went forth;' or, 'and going forth he wept.' *Secondly*, the preparative to the repentance, 'he went forth.' *Thirdly*, the repentance itself, comprised in the word *wept*. *Fourthly*, the extent, measure, and compass of this repentance, in the last word, *bitterly*.

First, He. The way of man's life is a slippery way; no man whilst he is in it hath the privilege of not sliding; just and unjust, thus far, are of like condition; both fall: but here they differ, the just man riseth again. Not the eminency of St. Peter's person, nor his great understanding in the mystery of Christ, nor his resolution in our Saviour's quarrel, nor the love and respect his master bare him, kept him from falling: but St. Peter being fallen, provides himself to rise, and therefore in the *second* place, 'he went forth,' saith my text: St. Peter was now in the High-priest's court, a place very unfit for one in St. Peter's case. Princes courts are no place for repentance: to wear soft raiment, to fare deliciously every day, this is courtiers guise; but the shirt of hair, the tears of repentance *; this is the habit of the penitent. But, *thirdly*, Wherefore went St. Peter out? Did he, as our Saviour observes of the Scribes and Pharisees, go out into the wilderness to see, to gaze and look about him? No, his eyes now must do him other service; he went out as Joseph did from

* Τὸ τριχινὸν ἱμάς, ὃ τὸ τῆς μετάνοιας δάκρυον.

the face of his brethren, to seek a place to weep. Maldonat the Jesuit thinks it would have been a more goodly thing, and far more befitting St. Peter's resolution, if in the place he had offended, in the same he had repented: if before those he had made a constant confession of Christ, before whom he had denied him. But be the reasons what they will which moved St. Peter to go forth, we will not prescribe unto the saints a form of repentance; we will cease therefore to dispute what St. Peter should have done, and rather gather lessons for ourselves out of what he did. *Fourthly*, and last of all, as St. Peter's fault was great, so he contends that his repentance may be as serious. The tears therefore he sheds are not slight and perfunctory, shed only only for fashion's sake, such as Quintilian spake of, 'Nothing sooner grows dry than tears *:' but, as the text saith, 'He wept bitterly:' to summon up a sort of Christians, who never had tear drop from their eye to witness their repentance †: to teach us to enlarge the measure of our sorrow for our sins, and in case of grievous relapse, not mince out our repentance, but to let loose the reins unto grief. And thus I come to handle the parts in order more particularly: and *first* of the person, *he*.

* Nihil facilius quam lacrymas inarescere. Inst. Orat: lib vi. c. 1.

† Siccoculum genus Christianorum. Alluding to Plautus, *Pseud.* i. v. 75. Genus nostrum semper siccoculum fuit.

Amongst all the saints of God, whose errors are set down in holy scriptures, there is none whose person was more eminent, or fall more dangerous, than St. Peter's. That which wise men have observed in great and eminent wits, that they evermore exceed; either they are exceeding good, or else they are exceeding bad, in St. Peter was true both ways. His gifts of faith, of understanding in the mystery of godliness, of resolution to die in our Saviour's cause, were wonderful: but yet his errors were as many and as strange; yea, so much the more strange, because in that thing he most offended, in which he was most eminent. It was a great argument of his faith, when in the tempest meeting our Saviour on the waters, he calls out unto him, 'If it be thou, command me to come unto thee on the waters;' Matth. xiv. 28. but no sooner was he come out of the ship, but through infidelity he began to sink. Again, of his great understanding in the mystery of Christ he gave a notable instance, when being questioned by our Saviour 'whom men took him to be?' he gave the first evident, plain, and open testimony that ever was given him by man, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.' Matth. xvi. 16. St. John indeed gave testimony, and so did St. Simeon, and so did many more; but it was more involved, done in more covert terms, more dark: whence we may, and that not without some probability, argue, that the understand-

ing of these men was not so evidently, so fully, so perspicuously enlightened as was St. Peter's. It is a great argument that a man doth passing well understand himself, when he is able perspicuously and plainly to speak to the understanding of another*: this confession therefore of St. Peter, that carries with it greater light and perspicuity than any yet that ever was given, doth not obscurely intimate, that he had a greater measure of illumination than any of his predecessors. Yet to see the wonderful dispensation of the Holy Ghost, scarce was this confession out of his mouth, but in the very next bout, where our Saviour begins further to inform him in the particulars of his passion, and death, and despicable handling by the Jews, the edge of his conceit was quite turned, quite blunted and dull: poor man, as if he had been quite ignorant of the end of Christ's coming, out of a humane conceit and pity, he takes upon him to counsel and advise our Saviour; 'Sir, favour yourself, these things shall not come unto you:' Matth. xvi. 23. and for this pains he is rewarded with no less reproachful a name than that of Satan, of a seducer, of a devil: he that shall peruse the story of the gospel, and here stay himself, might think that that which we read, St. John vi. 70. spoken of Judas, 'Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil,' were here fulfilled in St. Pe-

* Signum est intelligentis posse docere.

ter. Last of all, his love to Christ, and resolution in his quarrel, he gave an evident testimony, when he protested himself ready to lay down his life for him; 'Greater love than this,' in the Apostle's judgment, 'no man hath, than to lay down his life for his friend*:' this St. Peter had, if we may believe himself: yea, he began to express some acts of it, when, in defence of his master, he manfully drew his sword, and wounded the servant of the high priest. But see how soon the scene is changed; this good champion of our Saviour, as a lion that is reported to be daunted with the crowing of a cock, is stricken out of countenance, and quite amazed with the voice of a silly damsel; yea, so far is he possessed with a spirit of fear, that he not only denies, but abjures his master, and perjures himself, committing a sin not far behind the sin of Judas; yea, treading it hard upon the heels. But the mercy of God, that leaves not the honour of his servant in the dust of death, but is evermore careful to raise us up from the death of sin, unto the life of righteousness, suffers not this rock, this great pillar of his church to be overthrown. He first admonishes him by the crowing of a cock; when that would not serve, himself (full of careful love and goodness) though in the midst of his enemies, forgets his own danger, and remembers the danger of his servant; himself

* The author ought to have said 'in the judgment of our Lord himself;' for he alludes here to John xv. 13.

was now 'as a sheep before the shearer, dumb, 'and not opening his mouth;' *Isaiah liii. 7.* yet forgets he not, that he is that great shepherd of the flock, but, David like, rescues one of his fold from the mouth of the lion, and from the paw of the bear; 'He turns about, and looks upon him,' saith the text; he cries louder unto him with his look, than the cock could with his voice: of all the members in the body, the eye is the most moving part; *that* oft-times is spoken in a look, which by no force of speech could have been uttered; this look of Christ did so warm St. Peter, almost frozen dead with fear, that it made him well-near melt into tears: as if he had cried out with the Spouse, 'O turn away thine eyes, for they have 'overcome me;' *Cantic. vi. 5.* he grows impatient of his looks, and seeks for a place to weep; what a look was this think you? St. Jerom discoursing with himself what might be the cause that many of the disciples, when they were called by our Saviour, presently without further consultation arose and followed him, thinks it not improbable, that there did appear some glory and majesty in his countenance, which made them believe he was more than a man that thus bespake them: whatsoever then appeared in his looks, doubtless in this look of his was seen some sovereign power of his Deity, that could so speedily recover a man thus almost desperately gone: a man that had one foot in hell, whom one step

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more had irrecoverably cast away: it was this look of Christ that restored St. Peter: 'They weep for their sins,' saith St. Ambrose, 'whom Jesus looks upon: St. Peter denies him once, and repents not, for Jesus looked not back upon him; he denies him the second time, and yet he weeps not, for yet the Lord looked not back; he denies him the third time, and Jesus looks upon him and then he weeps bitterly*.' Before I come to make use of this, it will not be altogether impertinent to say something unto some queries that here arise concerning the condition of St. Peter, and in him of all the elect of God, whilst they are in a state of sin unrepented of; for, as for St. Peter's Faith, which some make doubt of, there can, as I conceive, no question be made. It is not to be thought that St. Peter had reversed with himself the confession that he had formerly made of Christ, or that he thought, doubtless I have erred, this is not the person whom I took him to be: indeed, through fear and cowardice he durst not confess that with his mouth unto salvation, which in his heart he believed unto righteousness: any thing further than this, that speech of our Saviour takes away, wherein he tells him beforehand, 'I have

* Quos respicit Jesus, plorant delictum: Negavit primo Petrus, et non flevit; quia non respexerat Dominus: negavit secundo, non flevit, quia adhuc non respexerat Dominus: negavit tertio, et respexit Jesus, et ille amarissime flevit. Ad Lucam x. c. 89.

'prayed that thy faith might not fail.' Luke xxii.
 32. But since, our age hath had experience of
 some, who, because the election of God standeth
 sure, and Christ's sheep none can take out of his
 hands, conclude therefore, that for the elect of
 God there is no falling from grace, that to David
 and Peter no ill could happen, no though (for so
 they have given it out) that they had died in the
 very act of their sin: to meet with such disputa-
 nts, I will briefly lay down what I conceive is to
 be thought in the point. Wherefore prepare thy
 mouth for bread, as St. Bernard speaks*; hither-
 to I have given you milk, provide your stomachs
 now for harder meat, and such as befits strong men
 in Christ. Peter and Judas (for I will couple them
 both together in my discourse, whilst they are
 both joined together in sin) Peter, I say, and Ju-
 das, in regard of their own persons, were both,
 more or less, in the same case, both fallen from
 grace, both in a state of sin and damnation, till
 the repentance of St. Peter altered the case on his
 part. But the grace of God signifies two things:
 either the purpose of God's election, the grace
 and favour inherent in the person of God, which
 he still casts upon those that are his, notwithstand-
 ing their manifold backslidings; or else it signifies
 the habit of sanctifying qualities, inherent in the
 regenerate man, those good graces of God, by
 which he walks holy and unblameable. Again, the

* Parate fauces pani.

state of damnation signifies likewise two things; either the purpose of God's reprobation, or else the habit of damnable qualities in the sinful man. From the state of grace, as it signifies the purpose of God to save, the elect can never fall; in the state of damnation, as it signifies something inherent in us, every man by nature is, and the elect of God, even after their calling many times fall into it: that is, they may and do many times fall into those sins, yea, for a time continue in them too, (David did so for a whole year's space) which, except they be done away by repentance, inevitably bring forth eternal death; for the state of mortal sin, unrepented of, is truly and indeed the state of death; yea the whole and sole reason of the condemnation of every one that perishes, for Christ hath said it, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all perish.' Luke xiii. 3. So then you see, that into the state of damnation, as it signifies something inherent in us, a man may fall, and yet not fall from the state of grace, as it signifies God's purpose of election: for both these are compatible for a time. If then we look upon the persons of Peter and Judas, both of them are in the state of mortal sin unrepented of, and therefore both in state of damnation: but if we look back unto God, we shall see a hand reached out unto St. Peter, pulling him back as he is now running down the hill, which hand we do not see reached out unto Judas. Christ had a look in store for St. Peter, which if it had

pleased him to have lent unto Judas, Judas would have done that which St. Peter did. When then we pronounce St. Peter, and in him any of the elect of God, as they are in St. Peter's case, to be fallen from grace, we speak not with relation to any purpose of God; but we mean only, that they have not that measure of sanctification which ought to be in every child which shall be an heir to life: and what hinders to pronounce that man fallen from grace, whom we must needs acknowledge to be in that state, in which if he continue, there is no way open but to death? What then may some men say, had St. Peter lost the spirit of adoption? had he not those sanctifying qualities of faith, hope, and charity, which are proper to the saints, and are given them by divine inspiration in the moment of their conversion? was that immortal seed of the word quite killed? No verily; How then? having all these, may he not yet be called the child of death? I answer, he may, and is indeed so; for these do not make him, that at no time he can be so; but, that finally he shall not be so, for they are not armour of proof to keep out all darts, neither do they make our souls invulnerable, as the poets feign the body of Cycnus or Achilles to have been; but they are precious balms evermore ready at hand to cure the wound when it is given: they are not of force to hinder mortal sin, (for then every soul in whom they are, were pure, undefiled, neither were it

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possible, that the elect of God, after their conversion, should fall) but they are of force to work repentance, which makes all our wounds remediable. He that is mortally sick and dies, and he that is likewise mortally sick, and through help of restoring physic recovers, in this both agree, that they are mortally sick, notwithstanding the recovery of one party. The wound of St. Peter and of Judas was mortal, and in both festred unto death; but there was balm in Gilead for St. Peter, for Judas there was none. The sting of the fiery scorpion in the wilderness was deadly, and all that looked not on the brazen serpent died: the brazen serpent altered not the quality of the scorpion's sting, it only hindered the working of the poison. The sting of sin in St. Peter and in Judas was deadly, but he that was lift up on mount Calvary, as the brazen serpent was in the wilderness, at him did St. Peter look and live; Judas did not look, and therefore died. How comes it about, Beloved, that God every where in scripture threatens death, without exception, to all that repent not, if the state of sin unrepented of, in whomsoever it is, be not indeed the state of death? When David was intending to stay in Keilah, and suspecting the inhabitants of that city, asks of God, whether the men of Keilah would deliver him over into the hand of Saul? 1 Sam. xxiii. 11. God tells him, they would: and therefore certainly had he staid there, he had been betrayed unto Saul.

To urge that St. Peter, because of God's purpose to save him, could not have finally miscarried, though he had died without repentance, (as some have not stuck to give out) is nothing else in effect, but to maintain against God, that David, had he staid in Keilah, had not fallen into Saul's hands, because we know it was God's purpose to preserve David from the violence of Saul: all the determinations of God are of equal certainty: it was no more possible for Saul to seize on David, than it is for the devil to pull one of God's elect out of his hand; as therefore the determinate purpose of God to free David from the malice of Saul, took not away that supposition, If David go to Keilah, he shall fall into the hands of Saul; so neither doth the decree of God to save his elect, destroy the supposition, if they repent not, they die eternally; for the purposes of God, though impossible to be defeated, yet lay not upon things any violent necessity, they exempt not from the use of ordinary means, they infringe not our liberty, they stand very well with common casualty; yea, these things are the very means by which his decrees are brought about.

I may not stand longer upon this; I will draw but one short admonition, and so to an end: Let no man presume to look into the third heaven, to open the books of life and death, to pronounce over peremptorily of God's purpose concerning himself, or any other man. Let every man look

into himself, and try whether he be in the faith or no? The surest means to try this, is to take an impartial view of all our actions. Many deceive themselves, whilst they argue from their faith to their works, whereas they ought out of their works to conclude their faith; whilst presuming they have faith, and the gifts of sanctification, they think all their actions warrantable: whereas we ought first thoroughly to sift all our actions, to examine them at the touch of God's commandments, and if indeed we find them current, then to conclude that they come from the sanctifying graces of the Holy Spirit. It is faith indeed that gives the tincture, the dye, the relish unto our actions; yet, the only means to examine our faith, is by our works. It is the nature of the tree that gives the goodness, the favour, and pleasantness to the fruit; yet, the fruit is the only means to us, to know whether the tree be good; 'By their fruit ye shall know them,' saith Christ. Matth. vii. 16. It is a rule not only to know others, but ourselves too. To reason thus, I am of the elect, I therefore have saving faith, and the rest of the sanctifying qualities, therefore that which I do is good; thus, I say, to reason is very preposterous: we must go a quite contrary course, and thus reason; My life is good, and through the mercies of God in Jesus Christ, shall stand with God's justice: I therefore have the gifts of sanctification, and therefore am of God's elect: for St. Peter to

have said with himself, I am of the elect, this sin therefore cannot endanger me, had been great presumption; but, thus to have reasoned, My sin is deadly, therefore except I repent, I am not of the number of God's elect; this reasoning had well befitted St. Peter, and becomes every Christian man, whom common frailty drives into the like distress.

I made my entrance into my sermon with the consideration of the wisdom of God, in permitting his chiefest servants to fall dangerously: I have largely exemplified it in the person of St. Peter: give me leave to make this further beneficial unto you, by drawing some uses from it; for great profit hath redounded to the church through the fall of these men. St. Ambrose saith of this fall of St. Peter, 'His sin hath more availed us, than the righteousness of many others*;' for wheresoever it pleases the Holy Spirit of God to work effectually (I speak cautelously, because I would give no place to presumption) in him he makes excellent use oftentimes, even of sin and evil. *First* of all, it is a tried case, that many times, through negligence and carelessness, we suffer ourselves to lie open to many advantages: in such a case as this, a blow given us, serves us for a remembrance to call our wits about us, to stir up the grace of God that is in us, which many times lies covered like fire un-

* Felicius ille cecidit quam caeteri steterunt. Ad Luc. x. c. 84.

der ashes; for as a skilful wrestler, having suffered his adversary to take advantage upon some oversight, recollects himself, and comes forward with greater strength and wariness: shame of the fall, and impatience of disgrace, adds strength unto him, and kindles him*: so oft-times is it with the saints of God; the shame of having fallen, makes them summon up their forces, to look better about them, to fulfil their duty in larger sort, than if they had not slipped at all. Hence it is, that we see that of the bitterest enemies of the church have been made the best converts; of this we have a notable example in St. Paul; how eager was he in the quarrel of the Jews against Christ? None a more mischievous enemy to the Christians than he; yet, when it pleased God to shew him his error, he proved one of the most excellent instruments of Christ's glory that ever was on earth; and so accordingly he gives himself a most true testimony, 'I have laboured more abundantly,' not than one or two of them, but, 'than they all, 1 Cor. xv. 10. his writings being as much in quantity as of them all; and St. Luke's story being nothing else almost but a register of the acts of St. Paul: the sense and conscience, I doubt not, of that infinite wrong done to the church, provoked him to measure back to the utmost of his power, his pains and labour in making up the breach he had for-

* *Tum pudor incendit vires et conscia virtus. Virg. Aëneid. lib. v.*

merly made. Here then is a notable lesson for us, teaching us to make our former sins and impieties admonitioners unto us, to know our own strength, and by Christian care and watchfulness to prevent all advantages, which the devil may take by our recklessness and negligence: for, Beloved, it is not so much our impotency and weakness, as our sloth and carelessness, against which the common enemy doth prevail; for through the grace of him that doth enable us, we are stronger than he: and the policy of Christian warfare hath as many means to beat back and defend, as the deepest reach of Satan hath to give the onset. The envious man in the gospel rushed not into the field in despite of the husbandman and the servants, but came and sowed his tares 'whilst men slept,' saith the text, Matth. xiii. 25. our neglect and carelessness is the sleep that he takes advantage of: when David was so strangely overtaken, the scripture tells us 'he rose from his bed, to walk on the top of his palace;' 2 Sam. xi. 2. from his bed indeed he arose, but not from his sleep; for mark, I beseech you, David had spent much of his time about the court, he had been abroad, and seen and ransacked many cities, and doubtless he had seen many women as fair as the wife of Uriah, and that in his younger days, when he was more apt to kindle; why then now commits he so great an oversight? Look on him a while as now he is; he is now at rest in his palace, at ease on his bed, and to solace

himself, he must rise and walk at the top of his house, and idly gaze upon a naked dame; of this his idleness the devil takes advantage; this is the sleep in which he comes and sows tares in David's heart, even all manner of lust: so that David fell as Adam did in paradise, not as a man that falls before an enemy stronger than himself. The greatest part of the sins which we commit are in this rank with David's sin: 'He is faithful,' saith the apostle, 'and suffers no man to be tempted above his strength.' 1 Cor. x. 13. Many creatures, if they knew their strength, would never suffer themselves to be awed by man as they are. Beloved, we are become like horse and mule, without understanding, we know not our strength, we are more blind than the servant of Elisha, and see not that 'they that are with us are more, and more mighty, than they that are against us:' 2 Kings vi. 16. The angels are ministering spirits, sent out of purpose to guard us, and doubtless do many and great services for us, though we perceive not; we have the army of God, 'where are a thousand bucklers, and all the weapons of the mighty;' Cantic. iv. 4. The helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit, the shield of faith, to quench all the fiery darts of sin: only let us not neglect to buckle it on, and make use of it. We have to strive with an enemy, such a one as Hannibal reported Marcellus to be; 'A restless enemy that is never quiet, howsoever the world goes;

‘ if he conquer us, he insolently insults upon us;
 ‘ if we foil him, he still bethinks himself how to
 ‘ set upon us afresh *.’ Let us not therefore suppose that the conquest will be gotten by sitting still, and wishing all were well †. We oft maintain against the church of Rome, that our natural abilities, whilst we live, serve us not to fulfil the law of God. What boots it thus to dispute? shall the confession of our unableness to do what we ought, excuse us at all, if we do not that which we are able? St. Austin was of opinion, how justly I will not dispute, but of that opinion he was, and it was the occasion of his book, *De spiritu et litera, ad Marcellinum*; that it was possible for us, even in this natural life, seconded by the grace of God, perfectly to accomplish what the law requires at our hands. Let the truth of this be as it may be, certainly that is most true which the same Father adds; That let our strength be what it will, yet, if we know not our duty, we shall do it no more; than the traveller, sound of body or limb, can go that way aright, of which he is utterly ignorant: yea, let our ability be perfect, and let our knowledge be also absolute, yet if we have no mind, if we want a love unto our duty, if we suffer ourselves to be overwayed by

* Qui nec bonam, nec malam ferre fortunam potest; seu vicit, ferociter instat victis; seu victus est, instaurat cum victoribus certamen. Liv. lib. 27. c. 19.

† Sedendo et votis debellari posse. Liv. lib. 22. c. 14.

affection to other things, yet shall we not do our duty: for which of us, being at liberty, will do that which he hath no love unto? Beloved, as for our knowledge, God hath left unto us scripture, the perfect register of all our duty, the absolute itinerary and map of all the course which in this life we are to run; and as for love, he plentifully sheds it in the hearts of all those that by faithful prayer beg it of him: if we shall search the scripture to improve our knowledge, if we shall earnestly beg at his hands to inflame our love; let our natural possibilities be what they will; he that now doth little amongst us shall do much, and he that doth much shall do much more: and the promises made unto the Jews concerning their carnal enemies, shall be made good on us concerning our spiritual and ghostly enemies, 'one of us shall chase a thousand,' Deut. xxxii. 30. and 'if they come out against us one way, they shall flee before us seven ways.' Deut. xxvii. 27. And thus much for the first use.

There is a *second* benefit of great weight and moment, which we reap out of the consideration of the errors of these excellent ministers of God; namely, a lesson teaching us to beware of spiritual pride. Of all the vices which our nature is subject unto, this is the most dangerous, and of which we had need be most cautelous: for whereas all other vices proceed from some ill in us, from some sinful imbecillity of our nature, this alone arises out of

our good parts: other sins draw their being from that original corruption which we drew from our parents, but this may seem to be the mother of that; as by which even natures unstained, and in their primitive purity, may most easily fall. And therefore, not without some probability, is it concluded in the schools, That no other crime could throw the angels down from heaven but this. That which one leaves for a memorial to great men, that in dangerous times, 'it was a matter of like danger to have a great name, as an ill *;' that may I pronounce of a Christian man, the danger of his innocency is not much less than of his faults. For this devil, when he cannot drive us to despair by reason of our sin, takes another course, to see if he can make us presume upon conceit of our righteousness: for, when by the preventing grace of God, we keep ourselves from greater offences, if we find ourselves to have a love unto the word of God, and the true professors of it, to be rich in alms-deeds, to have a part in other acts of righteousness, he makes us first take notice of these good things in us; notice taken, draws us to love and admire them in us; self-love draws us on to compare ourselves with others, then to prefer ourselves before others, and thirdly to disdain others in respect of ourselves. Here now is a gap laid open to a thousand inconveniences: and hence it

* Non minus periculum ex magna fama quam ex malis.
Tacit. vit. Agricolaë, c. 5.

is that we see divers times men, otherwise of life and reputation pure and unblameable, upon conceit and inconsiderateness, by a secret judgment of God, to fall upon extremes no less fearful, than are the issues of open profaneness and impiety. To cut off therefore all way that may be opened to let in spiritual pride, it hath pleased God to make use of this as of a sovereign remedy, namely, to permit, even in his most chosen vessels, evermore secret and hidden infirmities, and some times gross and open scapes, which may serve, when they look into themselves, to abate all overweening conceit of their own righteousness, and when they shall look into the errors of others, may be secret admonitioners unto them, not rashly to condemn them, considering their own weakness. I will therefore shut up this place with the saying of St. Ambrose; 'The fall of the saints is a very profitable thing; it hurts not me that St. Peter denied Christ, and the example of his amendment is very beneficial unto me*.' And so I come unto the preparative unto St. Peter's repentance, in these words, 'and he went forth.'

The wisdom of God hath taught the church sometime by express message delivered by words of mouth, sometime by dumb signs and actions.

* Etiam lapsus sanctorum utilis est; ecce nihil nobis apostolus nocuit quod negavit, et plurimum profuit quod emendavit. Ambros. serm. 46. *The Benedictins ascribe this piece to Maximus not to Ambrose.*

When Jeremy walked up and down the city with a yoke of wood about his neck, when Ezekiel lay upon his side, besieged a slate with the draught of Jerusalem upon it, and, like a banished man, carried his stuff upon his shoulders from place to place; they did no less prophesy the captivity, desolation, famine, and woe, which was to fall upon Jerusalem, than when they denounced it by direct word and speech: yea, many of the ordinary actions of the patriarchs, which seem to participate of chance, and to be in the same rank with those of other men, themselves (as a learned divine of our age, Mercerus, observes) not intending or understanding any such thing, contained by the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, especial lessons and instructions for us. That speech of Sarah, 'Cast out the bond woman and her son,' Gen. xxi. 10, seemed to Abraham only a speech of a cursed heart, and she herself perceives not herself to speak by direction from God, but moved with impatience of Ismael's petulant behaviour toward her son: yet, the Holy Ghost himself hath taught us, that this act of her prefigured a great mystery. Many disputations there are concerning the cause of this action of St. Peter's going forth: whether it were out of the common infirmity that is in most men, namely, a greater shame to repent than to offend? or, whether it were out of modesty and good nature, that he could not endure the sight of Christ, whom he had so grievously offend-

ed? Howsoever it were, we shall do this scripture no wrong, if we think it to contain an act in outward shew casual, and like unto the actions of other men, but inwardly indeed an especial action of a person great in the sight of God; and therefore comprehending some especial instruction. And, to speak plainly, this abandoning the place wherein he fell, the company for fear of whom he fell, and those things that were occasions of his sin, doth not obscurely point out unto us an especial duty of speedy relinquishing and leaving of all, either friends, or place, or means, or whatsoever else, though dearer unto us than our right hand, than our right eye, if once they become unto us inducements to sin. In former days, before the fulness of time came, the calling of the elect of God was not by any one act more often prefigured, than by this action of going forth; when the purpose of God was to select unto himself a church, and to begin it in Abraham, 'Come forth,' saith he unto him, 'out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house:' Gen. xii. 1. when Israel being in Egypt, it pleased God to appoint them a set form and manner of serving him, before this could be done, they and all theirs must 'come forth of Egypt, they must not leave a hoof behind them.' Exod. x. 26. When the time of the gospel was come, our Saviour holds the same course; none must be of his company, but such as come forth, 'leave all

and 'follow him:' Mark x. 21. and therefore the apostle, putting the Hebrews in mind of their duty, expresses it in this very term, 'Let us go forth' 'therefore unto him,' saith he, 'without the camp, bearing his reproach.' Heb. xiii. 13. And in the original language of the New Testament, the church hath her name from this thing, from being called forth; so that without a going forth there is no church, no Christianity, no service to God: the reason of all which is this, we are all by nature in the high priest's court, as St. Peter was, where we all deny and forswear our Master; as St. Peter did: neither is there any place for repentance, till, with St. Peter, we go forth and weep.

For our further light, we are to distinguish the practice of this our going forth, according to the diversity of the times of the church. In the first ages, when Christianity was like unto Christ, and had no place to hide its head, no entertainment but what persecution, and oppression, and fire, and sword could yield it; there was then required at the hands of Christians, an actual going forth, a real leaving of riches, and friends, and lands, and life, for the profession of the gospel. Afterward, when the tempests of persecutions were somewhat allayed, and the sky began to clear up, the necessity of actual relinquishing of all things ceased, Christians might then securely hold life and lands, and whatsoever was their own; yet, that it might

appear unto the world, that the resolution of Christian men was the same as in times of distress and want, so likewise in time of peace and security, it pleased God to raise up many excellent men, as well of the laity as of the clergy, who, without constraint, voluntarily and of themselves, made liberal distribution of all they had; left their means and their friends, and betook themselves to deserts and solitary places, wholly giving themselves over to meditation, to prayer, to fasting, to all severity and rigidity of life: what opinion our times hath of these, I cannot easily pronounce; thus much I know safely may be said, that when this custom was in its primitive purity, there was no one thing more behoveful to the church; it was the seminary and nursery of the fathers, and of all the famous ornaments of the church: those two things which afterwards, in the decay and ruin of this discipline, the church sought to establish by decrees and constitutions, namely, to estrange her priests from the world, and bind them to a single life, were the necessary effects of this manner of living; for when from their childhood they had utterly sequestered themselves from the world, and long practised the contempt of it; when, by chastising their body, and keeping it under with long fasting, they had killed the heat of youth, it was not ambition, nor desire of wealth, nor beauty of women, that could withdraw them, or sway their affections.

That which afterwards was crept into the church, and bare the name of monkery, had indeed nothing of it but the name; under the pretence of poverty they seized into their possession the wealth and riches of the world, they removed themselves from barren soils into the fattest places of the land, from solitary desarts into the most frequented cities; they turned their poor cottages into stately palaces, their true fasting into formalizing and partial abstinence: so that instead of going forth, they took the next course to come into the world; they left not the world for Christ, but under pretence of Christ they gained the world, as Nazianzen speaks*: one of their own, St. Jerom by name, long ago complained of it; ‘Some there are, more opulent as monks than they were while laics, and clergy who, under the indigent Jesus, possess wealth which under the deceitful evil spirit of riches they did not possess: in so much that the church mourns for the opulence of her children, who being yet children of this world, were poor †.’

But I forbear, and come to commend unto you another kind of going forth, necessary for all per-

* "Ὡς περ ἔκ ἀρετῆς τύπον, ἀλλ' ἀφορμὴν τῷ βίῳ τὴν τάξιν αὐτὴν εἶναι νομίζοντες.

† Nonnulli sunt ditiores monachi, quam fuerant seculares; et clerici qui possideant opes sub paupere Christo, quas sub fallaci et locuplete diabolo non habuerant; ut suspiret eos ecclesia divites, quos tenuit mundus ante mendicos. Lib. ii, Epist. ad Nepotianum.

sons, and for all times: there is a going forth in act and execution, requisite only at some times, and upon some occasions; there is a going forth in will and affections; this, let the persons be of what calling soever, and let the times be never so favourable, God requires at the hands of every one of us. We usually indeed distinguish the times of the church into times of peace, and times of persecution: the truth is, to a true Christian man the times are always the same: 'There is a martyrdom, faith one, even in time of peace*;' for the practice of a Christian man, in the calmest times, in readiness and resolution, must nothing differ from times of rage and fire. Josephus, writing of the military exercises practised amongst the Romans, reports, that for seriousness they differed from a true battle only in this, 'The battle was a bloody exercise, their exercise a bloodless battle†;' like unto this must be the Christian exercise in times of peace, neither must there be any difference betwixt those days of persecution, and these of ours, but only this, those yielded martyrs with blood, ours without. Let therefore every man thoroughly examine his own heart, whether, upon supposal of times of trial and persecution, he can say with David, 'My heart is ready:' Psal.

* Habet etiam pax suos martyres.

† Καὶ ὅτε ἂν ἀμάρτοι τις ἦν, τὰς μὲν μελέτας αὐτῶν χάρις αἵματος παρατάξεις. τὰς παρατάξεις δὲ, μετ' αἵματος μελέτας.
De Bell. Judaic. lib. iii. c. 5. §. 1.

cvi. 1. [old translation] whether he can say of his dearest pledges, 'All these have I counted dung for Christ's sake?' Philip. iii. 8. whether he find in himself that he can, if need be, even lay down his life for his profession? He that cannot do thus, what differs his faith from a temporary faith, or from hypocrisy? Mark, I beseech you, what I say; I will not affirm, I will only leave it to your Christian discretion: a temporary faith, that is, a faith resembled to the seed in the gospel, which being sown on the stony ground, withered as soon as the sun arose, a faith that fails as soon as it feels the heat of persecution, can save no man. May we not with some reason think, that the faith of many a one, who in time of peace seems to us, yea, and to himself too peradventure, to die possessed of it, is yet, notwithstanding, no better than a temporary faith, and therefore comes not so far as to save him that hath it? Rufus, a certain philosopher, whensoever any scholars were brought unto him to receive education under him, was wont to use all possible force of argument to dissuade them from it; if nothing could prevail with them, but needs they will be his hearers, this their pertinacy he took for a sure token of a mind thoroughly settled, and led, as it were by instinct, to their studies. If God should use this method to try who are his, and bring on us those temptations which would make the man of a temporary faith to shrink, think we that all those who, in these times

of peace, have born the name of Christ unto their graves, would have born unto the rack, unto the sword, unto the fire? Indeed to man, who knows not the thoughts of his friend, some trials some times are very necessary; but he that knew and foretold David what the resolution of the men of Keilah would be, if Saul came to them, knows likewise what the resolution of every one of us would be, if a fiery trial should appear. Who knows, therefore, whether God hath numbered out the crowns of life, according to the number of their souls, who he foreknew would, in the midst of all temptations and trials, continue unto the end? For what difference is there betwixt the faith that fails upon occasion, or that would fail if occasion were offered? for the actual failing of faith is not that that makes it temporary, it is only that which detects it, which bewrays it unto us to be so. The faith therefore of that man which would have funk as fast as St. Peter did, if tempests had arisen, notwithstanding that through the peace of the church he dies possessed of, is no better than a temporary, and cometh short of a saving faith. It is a hard speech, some man may say; but let him that thinks thus recount with himself, that it is a hard way that leads to life. Beloved, deceive not yourselves; heaven never was, nor will be gotten without martyrdom: In a word, my brethren, try therefore yourselves, whether you have in you true resolution: summon up your thoughts, sur-

vey every path in wich your affections were wont to tread; see whether you are prepared to leave all for Christ: if you find in yourselves but one affection looking back to Sodom, to the things of this life, 'remember Lot's wife,' Luke xvii. 32. her case is yours; you are not yet sufficiently provided for the day of battle.

C H R I S T I A N O M N I P O T E N C Y.

Philip. iv. 13.

*I can do all things through Christ, [that enableth,
or] that strengtheneth me.*

FROM henceforth let all complaint concerning the frailty and weakness of man's nature for ever cease: for behold our weakness swallowed up of strength, and man is become omnipotent; 'I can do all things,' saith my Apostle. The strongest reason, which the subtlest above all the beasts of the field could invent, to draw our first parents from their allegiance, was this, 'Ye shall be like gods.' Gen iii. 5. Our Saviour, who is infinitely wiser to recall us, than our adversary was to seduce us, takes the same way to restore, as *he* did to destroy, and uses that for physic, which the devil gave for poison: Is this it, saith he unto us, that hath drawn you from me, that ye would be like unto Gods? why, then return again, and ye shall be like gods, by imparting unto you such excellencies as are proper unto myself: as I myself do all things, so shall you likewise be enabled to do all things through me. It was the observation

of the Heathen historian, 'That it is an error in
'men, thus to complain of the infirmities and weak-
'ness of their nature*;' for man indeed is a crea-
ture of great strength, and if at any time he find
himself weak, it is through his fault, not through
his nature: but he that shall take into considera-
tion these words of my text, shall far better than
any natural man be able to perceive, that man hath
no cause to complain of his weakness. It was a
tale that passed among some of the Heathen, that
Vulcan, offended with the men of Athens, told
them that they should be but fools; but Pallas,
that favoured them, told them they should be
fools indeed, but folly should never hurt them†.
Beloved, our case is like to that of the men of A-
thens; Vulcan, the devil, hath made us fools and
weak, and so we are indeed of ourselves; but the
Son of God, the true Pallas, the Wisdom of the
Father, hath given us this gift, that our weakness
shall never hurt us: for, look what strength we
lost in Adam, that, with infinite advantage, is sup-
plied in Christ. It was the parable of Iphicrates,
that an army of harts, with a lion to their captain,
would be able to vanquish an army of lions, if

* Falso queritur de natura sua genus humanum, quod im-
becilla sit. Sallust. Bell. Jugurth. c. 1.

† ——— φασὶ γὰρ δυσβουλίαν

τῆς τῇ πόλει προσεῖναι· ταῦτα μὲν τοι τὸς θεός,

ἄττ' ἐν ὁμῆς ἔχαμάρτη', ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον τρίπων.

Aristophan. Νεφέλ. γ. 532. et ib. schol.

their captain were but a hart. Beloved, were mankind indeed but an army of harts, were we like unto the fearful hind upon the mountains, that starts at every leaf that shakes; yet through Christ that strengtheneth us, having the Lion of the tribe of Judah for our captain and leader, we shall be able to vanquish all that force, which the lion that goeth up and down, seeking whom he may devour, is able to bring against us. Indeed we do many times sadly bemoan our case, and much rue the loss, which, through the recklessness of our first parents, hath befallen us; yet let us cheer up ourselves, our fear is greater than our hurt. As Elkanah speaks unto Hannah, in the first of Samuel i. 8. 'Why weepest thou? am not I better unto thee than ten sons?' So will we comfort ourselves in the like manner; let us sorrow no more for our loss in Adam; for is not Christ tenfold better unto us, than all the good of paradise? 'The mulberry-tree indeed is broken down, but 'it is built up again with cedar.' Isaiah ix. 10. The loss of that portion of strength, wherewith our nature was originally endued, is made up with fulness of power in Christ; it is past that conclusion of Zeba and Zalmunna unto Gideon, in the book of Judges viii. 21. 'As the man is, so is his strength;' for now, Beloved, as God is, so is our strength. Wherefore, as St. Ambrose spake of St. Peter's fall, 'It hurt not me that Peter denied his Lord, but it hath profited me that Pe-

'ter repented *.' So we may speak of the fall of our first parents, it hurts not us that Adam fell ; nay, our strength and glory is much improved, that by Christ we are redeemed. Our natural weakness, be it never so great, with this supply from Christ, is far above all strength of which our nature, in its greatest perfection, was capable. If we survey the particulars of that weakness, which we drew from the loins of our first parents, we shall find the chiefest part of it to be in the loss of immortality. For as for the loss of that pleasant place, the blindness of understanding, and perverseness of will, being supposed to betide us immediately upon the fall, these seem weaknesses far inferior to our mortality. For God, forbidding us the fruit of the tree of knowledge, and setting down the penalty that should ensue, making choice (as it is most likely) of the fearfullest judgment, and what he saw in his wisdom was most likely to awe us, threatens neither blindness of understanding, nor crookedness of nature, but tells us, 'What day ye eat of it, ye shall die.' Gen. ii. 17. Ye see, Beloved, with how great strength this mortal weakness is repaired : for thus to be able to encounter with death, the fearfullest of all God's curses, and through Christ overcome it, as all true

* Non mihi obfuit quod negavit Petrus, immo profuit, quod emendavit. Serm. 46. *The author quotes from memory.*

Christians do, to turn the greatest curse into the greatest blessing, is more than immortality.

Had not man been thus weak, he had never been thus strong*. Again, on the contrary, let us conceive unto the utmost, what our strength might be in our first estate, let us raise our conceit unto the highest note we can reach, yet shall we never find it to be greater than what here is express in my text. For greater ability, than power to do all things, is not imaginable, 'I can do all things.' Beloved, these words are Anakims, they beseeem not the mouth of a man of ordinary strength; he that hath right unto them must be one of the race of the giants at least; for he saith not simply, 'I can,' though peradventure with some difficulty, hardly, with much labour and pains; but he saith, 'I can with ease,' I have valour and strength to do them†. I ask then, *first*, as the eunuch doth in the Acts, of whom speaks our apostle this, of himself, or of some other man? I answer, both of himself, and all other Christians; for every Christian man, by reading it as he ought, makes it his own, for in reading it as he ought, he reads it with the same spirit with which St. Paul wrote it. Wherefore as St. Paul somewhere records of himself, that he was not found inferior to the chief apostles, so is it true, that the meanest Christian that hears me this day, in all that is contained in

* Si non errasset, fecerat ille minus. Martial.

† Not πάντα δύναμαι, but πάντα ἰσχύω.

my text, is paralleled, is nothing inferior unto St. Paul, unto the chief apostles. What a comfort then is this unto the brother of low degree, when he considers with himself, that how mean soever he may seem to be, either in the church or commonweal, yet notwithstanding, in so great a privilege as is this omnipotent power of doing all things, he is equal unto St. Peter, unto St. Paul, the greatest peers of the church? If then the weakness of Christians be so strong, as to deserve the name of almightiness, what name, what title, doth the strength of a Christian deserve to bear?

Secondly, I ask what meaning hath this word *ἰχϋω*, this 'can do' in my text? I answer, very large: *first*, though it be rendered by this word doing, yet it comprehends sufferings too: for I can, is as well to suffer as to do; and that our blessed apostle, amongst other things, so meant it, is apparent by the words foregoing my text. And here is the first part of a Christian's omnipotency: his patience is infinite, it suffers all things. Never any contumely, never any loss, never any smart so great, as could weary out Christian patience. 'Such examples,' saith Tertullian, 'such precepts, have we of Christian patience, as that with infidels they seem incredible, and call in question the truth of our profession; but with us they are the ground and foundation of faith*.' God

* Talia tantaque documenta, quorum magnitudo penes na-

himself did never yet try the utmost of a Christian's patience; neither hath he created any object that is able to equal it: yet he seems, for our instruction, to have gone about to try what might have been done: he commanded Abraham to sacrifice his dear and only son; 'So heavy,' saith Tertullian, 'was the command, that God himself liked not it should be acted; yet Abraham heard it patiently, and had fulfilled it, if God would have given him leave*.' What should I speak of poverty, of disease, of the sword, of fire, of death itself. 'Oh! at what a loss I am,' saith Gordius the martyr in St. Basil, 'that I can die but once for my Saviour †?' Take the greatest instance of God's fury and wrath, even the pains laid up in hell for the sinner, and we shall find that there have been Christians, who, for the glory of God, would gladly have endured them; St. Paul is the man amongst all the saints of God, the greatest and worthiest example of this wonderful strength, of this omnipotency of a Christian man; what evil is imaginable, which he did not either indeed, or at

tiones detractatio fidei est, penes nos vero, ratio, et structio.
De Patientia. c. 3.

* Tam grave praeceptum, quod nec Deo perfici placebat, patienter et audivit, et si Deus voluisset, impleisset. De Patientia. c. 6.

† Οἷα ζημιῶμαι μὴ δυνάμενος ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ πολλάκις ἀποθανῆναι.
Hom. in Gordium. §. 4.

least in will and affection, undergo *? 'I am on fire,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'when I speak of St. Paul †:' and indeed, whom would it not inflame, to read that admirable synopsis and brief of his sufferings, registered in the second of the Corinthians? xi. 23. 'In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft;' and could he do more? yes, he could; hitherto he reports historically what was done, and as if that were not enough, he tells us what he would have done ‡, and that his patience was able even gladly to have encountered hell itself; I have prayed, saith he in the ninth of the Romans, I have prayed unto God, I have begged it at his hands, as a favour, that, for the increase of his glory, through the salvation of Israel, my kinsmen according to the flesh, I might become a cast-away, and endure the pains of eternal fire. Tertullian, considering the wonderful patience of our Saviour upon his cross, thinks, that if there had been no other argument to prove him to be God, yet this alone had been sufficient. Hence especially, ye Pharisees, ought ye to have acknowledged the Lord, such patience it was impossible for man to dis-

* *Omnem patientiae speciem adversus omnem diaboli vim expunxit.* Tertull. de Patientia. c. 3.

† *Ἐκκ. 'καὶ γὰρ εἰς τὸν τῷ ἀνδρὶ πόθεν, καὶ διὰ τούτου συνέχως αὐτὸν περιστάσεων οὐ παύμαι.* In cap. i. Genes. Homil. xi. §. 5.

‡ *Sed ubi historiam praestare non potuit, votum attulit.*

play *. In like manner, may we truly say, were there no other argument to prove that Christ doth dwell in us, doth mightily strengthen and enable us, yet this wonderful measure of patience in so finite a creature, could never subsist, if God were not in us of a truth.

Again, *ἰχθυω*, this word of *doing* here in my text, signifies not only sufferings and patience, this were to make a Christian but a kind of stone: a Christian hath not only a buckler to resist, but he must have a sword to strike. Wherefore this word of *doing* must signify yet further some action and life, and so indeed it doth; for it notes unto us the most glorious and eminent kind of Christian action, victory and conquest; and when my apostle here saith, 'I can do all things,' his meaning is, I can overcome and conquer all things. And here is the second and most glorious part of Christian omnipotency; never was any true Christian overcome, or can be; for look how much he yields unto his enemy, so much he fails of his profession and title. David complains of Joab and his brethren, 'These sons of Zeruiah are too strong for me.' 2 Sam. xix. 22. But, Beloved, a Christian man finds none of these sons of Zeruiah, whom he needs to fear, or of whom he needs to complain. For as Aristotle tells us, that a magna-

* Hinc vel maxime, Pharisei Dominum agnoscere debuerunt; patientiam hujusmodi nemo hominum perpetraret. De Patientia, c. 3.

nimous man is he, 'who thinks nothing great *,' but conceits all things as inferior to himself; so may we define a true Christian to be such a one, as to whom nothing is dreadful, in whose eye nothing under God carries any shew of greatness. St. Paul hath left us a catalogue, in the end of the eighth to the Roman, of all the forces, outward and inward, bodily and ghostly, that can be mustered against us; 'Life, death, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, any creature' imaginable, and pronounces of them, that in all these 'we are conquerors;' *conquerors* is too mean a word, we are 'more than conquerors †.' Rom. viii. 37. 'We conquer them,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'with ease, without any pains or sweat ‡.' We shall not need to bring forth against them all our forces, a small part of them will be sufficient to gain the day §; and not only to overcome them, but turn them to our benefit and behoof. For sin is like unto Sampson's lion, it comes upon us with open mouth to devour us, but when we have slain it, we shall find honey in the belly of it. Wonderful therefore is the power of a Christian, who not only o-

* Ὁ ὁδὸν μέγα. Ethic. Nicom. lib. iv. c. 3.

† Ὡς νικῶμεν.

‡ Μετ' εὐκολίας πάσης, χάρις πόνου ἔ ιδρύτων. Hom. kv. in epist. ad Roman.

§ ——— Paucas victoria dextras
Exigit.

vercomes, and conquers, and kills the viper, but, like the skilful 'apothecary, makes antidote and treacle of him. Indeed our adversaries seem to be very great; St. Paul calls them by wonderful names, as if he meant to affright us; ' Powers, ' principalities, depths;' Rom. viii. 39. ' the prince ' that ruleth in the air, the God of this world,' Ephes. ii. 2. and what not? Yet notwithstanding, as one speaks in Livy of the Macedonian war, as I remember, ' We must not think there will be any ' doubt of the victory, because it is a war of great ' name and noise*;' for me-thinks I discover in our apostle, when he uses these strange astonishing words, a spiritual stratagem, by which to stir us up, and make us stand upon our guard, he makes the largest report of our enemies forces. We read that one of the Roman captains, perceiving his soldiers unnecessarily to faint, draws out letters before them, and reads the news of that which never was, of I know not what kings with armies and multitudes coming forthwith against them; which art of his did much avail him to gain the victory, because it made the soldiers to recollect themselves, and fight with all their might. Beloved, I may not think that the apostle, in making this report of our enemies forces, relates that which is not; but this, I think, I may safely say, that he makes the most of that which is: for it

* Non quam magni nominis bellum est, tam difficilem existimaveritis victoriam.

can never hurt us to take our enemy to be as strong as he is, or peradventure stronger, for this is a very profitable error, it makes us more wary, and provide ourselves the better. But to slight and contemn our enemy, to err on the contrary side, and think him to be weaker than he is, this hath caused many an overthrow. It is a rule which Vegetius gives us; 'It is an hard matter to overcome him that truly knoweth his own strength, and the strength of his adversary *.' And here, Beloved, is the error of most Christians, we do not know of what strength we are; we look upon this body of ours, and suppose that in so weak and faint a subject there cannot subsist so great strength, as we speak of; as if a man should prize the liquor by the baseness of the vessel in which it is. As divers landlords have treasures hidden in their fields, which they know not of, so many of us have this treasure of omnipotency in us, but we care not to discover it, and to know it; did we but perfectly know our own strength, and would we but compare it with the strength of our enemies, we should plainly discover, that we have such infinite advantage above them, that our conquest may seem not to be so great as is pretended: for the greater the advantages are, the glory of the victory is the less; and that which makes a conquest great, is not so much

* Difficile vincitur, qui de suis, et adversarii copius veropoteest judicare. Lib. iii. c. 26.

the greatness of him that conquers, as the strength and greatness of him that is overthrown. Now what proportion is there betwixt the strength of God himself dwelling in us, and all the strength of heaven, earth, and hell besides? How then can we count this spiritual war so fearful, which is waged upon so unequal terms; in which, if we but give the onset, we are sure to gain the victory? To resist is to conquer*; for so saith the apostle, 'Resist the devil, and he shall flee from you.' Jam. iv. 7. There was never yet any Christian conquered, that would not; and in this war not to yield the victory, is to get it. As therefore one spake of Alexander's expedition into India, 'The matter was not much which he did, the greatest thing in it was, that he durst do it †:' so considering our strength, and the weakness of our adversaries, we may, without prejudice, speak even of the worthiest soldiers that ever fought these spiritual battles, the greatest thing that we can admire in them, is, that they durst do it. Would we but a little examine the forces of our adversaries, we should quickly find it to be as I have said. When Alcibiades, a young gentleman of Athens, was afraid to speak before the multitude, Socrates, to put him in heart, asks him, Fear you, saith he, such a one? and names one of the multitude to

* In quo si modo congressus cum hoste sis, viceris; restitisse vicisse est.

† Bene ausus est vana contemnere.

him; No, saith Alcibiades, he is but a tradesman! Fear you such a one? saith he, and names a second; No, for he is but a peasant: or such a one? and names a third: No, for he is but an ordinary gentleman: Now, saith he, of such as these doth the whole multitude consist: and by this device he encouraged Alcibiades to speak. He that shall fear to encounter the multitude, and army of spiritual adversaries which are ready to set themselves against him, let him do by himself as Socrates did by Alcibiades; let him sit down and consider with himself his enemies one by one, and he shall quickly discover their weakness. It is a saying, 'That the first thing that is overcome in a soldier is his eye *,' while he judges of his enemy by his multitude and provision, rather than by his strength. Beloved, if we judge not of our adversary in gross, and as it were by the eye, we shall easily see, that we shall not need to do as the king in the gospel doth, send to his enemy with conditions of peace; for there is no treaty of peace to be had with these. 'Had Zimri peace that slew his master,' saith the scripture, 2 Kings ix. 31. and, 'there is no peace unto the wicked,' saith my God, Isaiah xlviii. 22. Not only Zimri, and the wicked, but no Christian hath, or can have peace, he must be always as fighting, and always conquering. Let us single out some one of this army, and let us examine his

* *Primi in praeliis vincuntur oculi.* Tacit. de moribus German. c. 43.

strength. Is it Sin doth so much affright us? I make choice of it, because it is the dreadfulest enemy that a Christian hath: let us a little consider its strength, and we shall quickly see there is no such need to fear it: sins are of two sorts, either great and capital, or small and ordinary sins: I know it were a paradox in nature to tell you, that the greatest and mightiest things are of least force; yet this is true in the case we speak of, the greatest things are the weakest. Your own experience tells you, that rapes and murders, parricide, poisoning, treason, and the rest of that rabble of arch-sins, are the sins of the fewest, and that they have no strength at all but upon the weakest men; for doubtless if they were the strongest, they would reign with greatest latitude, they would be the commonest, they would be the sins of the most: but wandering thoughts, idle words, petty lusts, inconsiderate wrath, immoderate love to the things of the world, and the rest of that swarm of ordinary sins, these are they that have largest extent and dominion, and some of these, or all of these, more or less, prevail with every man. As the magicians in Exodus, when they saw not the power of God in the serpents, in the blood, in the frogs, at the coming of the plague of the lice, presently cried, 'This is the finger of God:' *Exod. viii. 19.* so I know not how it comes to pass, though we see and confess that in those great and heinous crimes, the devil hath least power; yet at the com-

ing of lice, of the rout of smaller and ordinary sins, we presently yield ourselves captives, and cry out, the strength of the devil is in these; as if we were like unto that fabulous rock in Pliny, which if a man thrust at with his whole body, he could not move it, yet a man might shake it with one of his fingers*. Now what an error is it in us Christians, when we see the principal and captain sins so easily vanquished, to think the common soldier or lesser sort invincible? For certainly, if the greatest sins be the weakest, the lesser cannot be very strong.

Secondly, is it original corruption that doth so much affright us? Let us consider this a little, and see what great cause we have to fear it. And first, Beloved, let us take heed that we seem not to combat a shadow, to fight with our own fancy, and not so much to find, as to feign an enemy. Mistake me not, I beseech you, I speak not this as doubting that we drew any natural infection from the loins of our parents: but granting this, I take it to be impossible to judge of what strength it is, and deny that it is any such cause why we should take it to be so strong, as that we should stand in fear to encounter it, and overcome it; for we can never come to discover how far our nature is necessarily weak; for whilst we are in our infancy,

* Juxta Harpasa oppidum Asiae cautes stat horrenda, uno digito mobilis; eadem si toto corpore impellatur, resistens. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. c. 98.

and as yet not altered from that which God and nature made us, none of us understand ourselves; and ere we can come to be of years to be able to discover it, or define any thing concerning the nature of it, custom or education, either good, hath much abated, or evil hath much improved the force of it; so that, for any thing we know, the strength of it may be much less than we suppose, and that it is but a fear that makes it seem so great. 'It is,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'the nature of timorous and fearful men evermore to be framing to themselves causeless fears*.' I confess, it is a strange thing, and it hath many times much amazed me, to see how ripe to sin many children are, in their young and tender years; and, ere they understand what the name of sin and evil means, they are unexpectedly, and no man knows by what means, wonderfully prompt and witty to villany and wickedness, as if they had gone to school to it in their mothers womb. I know not to what cause to impute this thing, but I verily suppose I might quit original sin from the guilt of it: for it is a ruled case, and concluded by the general consent of the schools, that original sin is alike in all: and St. Paul seems to me to speak to that purpose, when he saith, that 'God hath alike concluded all under sin,' Galat. iii. 22. and that 'all are alike deprived of the glory of

* Αἱ δαίλαι φύσεως πλείονα τῶν ὄντων ἀναπλάττειν δύνασθαι.

'God.' Rom. iii. 23. Were therefore original sin the cause of this strange exorbitancy in some young children, they should all be so; a thing which our own experience teaches us to be false; for we see many times even in young children many good and gracious things, which being followed with good education, must needs come to excellent effect: 'In children,' saith Quintilian, 'many times an hope of excellent things appears, which in ripper age, for want of cherishing, fades and withers away; a certain sign that nature is not so weak, as parents and tutors are negligent*:' whence then comes this difference? certainly not from our nature, which is one in all, but from some other cause. As for original sin, of what strength it is I will not discuss: only thus much I will say, there is none of us all but is much more wicked than the strength of any primitive corruption can constrain. Again, let us take heed that we abuse not ourselves, that we use not the names of original weakness as a stale and stalking horse, as a pretence to choke and cover somewhat else: For oftentimes when evil education, wicked examples, long custom, and continuance in sin hath bred in us an habit and necessity of sinning; presently original sin, and the weakness of man's nature, bear the blame. 'When through sloth and

* In pueris elucet spes plurimorum, quae cum emoritur aetate, manifestum est, non naturam defecisse sed curam. Inst. Orat. lib. i. c. 1.

' idleness, luxury and distemper, our time is lost, ' our bodies decayed, our wits dulled, we cast all ' the fault on the weakness of our nature †; ' that ' law of sin in our members,' of which St. Paul spake, Rom. vii. 23. and which some take to be original corruption; St. Austin once pronounced of it (whether he meant to stand to it I know not, but so he once pronounced of it) ' That the law ' of sin, that carries us against our wills to sin, is ' nothing else but the force and violence of long ' custom and continuance in sin ‡.' I know that, by the error of our first parents, the devil hath blinded and bound us more than ever the Philistines did Samson; yet this needs not to make us thus stand in fear of original weakness; for blind and bound as we are, let the devil build never so strong, yet if our hair be grown, if Christ do strengthen us, we shall be able, Samson-like, to bear his strongest pillars, and pull down his house about his ears.

Thirdly, Is it the devil that we think so strong an adversary? Let us a little consider his strength: he may be considered either as an inward enemy, suggesting unto us sinful thoughts; or as an outward enemy, lying in wait to afflict us in body, in goods, or the like. First, against us inwardly, he

† Ubi per secediam, vires, tempus, ingenium, defluxere, naturae infirmitas accusatur. Sallust. Bell. Jugurth. c. 1.

‡ Lex peccati est violentia consuetudinis. Confes. lib. viii. c. 5.

hath no force of his own; from ourselves it is that he borrows this strength to overthrow us. In paradise he borrowed the serpent to abuse us, but now every man is that serpent by which himself is abused. For as Hannibal having overthrown the Romans, took their armour, and fought against them with their own weapons; so the devil arms himself against us with our own strength, our senses, our will, our appetite; with these weapons he fights against us, and uses us against ourselves; let us but recover our own again, and the devil will be disarmed: Think you that the devil is an immediate stickler in every sin that is committed? I know you do: but take heed, lest this be but an excuse to unload your faults upon the devil, and to build them upon his back; for St. Chrysostom thought otherwise; 'The devil's hand,' saith he, 'is not in every fault, many are done merely by our own carelessness*.' A negligent careless person sins, though the devil never tempt him†. Let the truth of this lie where it will, I think I may safely speak thus much, that if we would but shut up our wills, and use that grace of God which is

* Οὐ γὰρ δὲ πάντα, αὐτὸς κατασκευάζει, ἀλλὰ πολλὰ, καὶ ἀπὸ μόνης γίνεται τῆς νοθείας τῆς ἡμετέρας.

† Ὁ ἀσθενὴς καὶ μὴ διάβολος ἢ, βλάπτεται.

I have not found this passage in St. Chrysostom, but the same thing is said in words not much unlike. Ὁ ἀσθενὴς — ἢ διαβόλου ἢ ἑντος καταπίπτει. De Diab. Tentatore Homil. ii. §. 2.

offered, I doubt not but a great part of this fug-
 gesting power of his would fall to nothing. As
 for that other force of his, by which he lies in
 wait to annoy us outwardly, why should we so
 dread that? Are there not more with us both in
 multitude and strength to preserve us? 'The an-
 gel of the Lord (saith the Psalmist) pitches his
 tents round about those that fear him, to de-
 liver them;' Ps. xxxiv. 7. and the apostle af-
 fures us, that 'the angels are ministering spirits,
 sent forth for those that shall be heirs of salvation.'
 Heb. i. 14. shall we think that the strength of those
 to preserve, is less than that of the evil angels to
 destroy? One Garcaeus, writing upon the meteors,
 told me long since, that whereas many times be-
 fore great tempests, there is wont to be heard, in
 the air above us, great noise and rushing, the cause
 of this was, the banding of good and evil angels,
 the one striving to annoy us with tempests, the o-
 ther striving to preserve us from the danger of it.
 And I doubt not, but as about Moses's body, so
 about every faithful person, these do contend, the
 one to hazard, the other to deliver. Yea, but the
 devil inspires into us evil thoughts: well, and
 cannot good angels inspire good? They are all,
 for any thing appears, by the law of their creati-
 on equal, and shall we think that God did give
 unto the devil an inspiring faculty to entangle,
 which he denied to his good angels to free us
 from? Though good angels could not inspire

good thoughts, yet God both can and doth: so that, for any thing yet appears, we have no such cause to stand in fear of the strength of the devil, either inwardly or outwardly. Thus have I examined the force of three of our principal enemies; I could proceed to examine other particulars of this army of our adversaries, the world, the flesh, persecutions, and the rest, and make the like question of them, as I have done of these, and so conclude as Socrates did to Alcibiades. If you have just cause to fear none of these, why should you fear them all, since that of such as these the whole knot of them consists? But I must proceed to search out yet another meaning of this word *doing* in my text; and that briefly.

Thirdly, Therefore we may take this word of doing in its largest sense: as if the apostle had meant literally, that indeed a Christian can do all things, that he had such a power and command over the creature, as that he could do with it what he list. In which sense it is likewise true, though with some limitation; and here is the third degree of our Christian omnipotency. In the former parts the omnipotency of a Christian suffered no restraint, it was illimited, unconfined. He is absolutely omnipotent in his patience, and can suffer all things: he is likewise absolutely omnipotent in battle, and can conquer all his enemies. But in this third signification, his power seems to be streightened: for how many things are there which

no Christian man can do? yet he is so-strengthened, as that his omnipotency suffers not. We are taught in the schools, though God be omnipotent, yet many things may be named which he cannot do: he cannot deny himself, he cannot lie, he cannot sin, he cannot die. Yet may we not conclude, that therefore God is not omnipotent; for therefore is he the more omnipotent, because he cannot do these things: for ability to do these things, is imperfection and weakness; but in God we must conceive nothing but what argues perfection and strength. In some degree we may apply this unto ourselves, in things that tend to Christian perfection, every Christian is omnipotent, he cannot raise the dead, turn water into wine, speak with tongues: true, but if he could, had he for this any further degree of perfection above other Christians? our Saviour seems to deny it. 'For many' (saith he) at that day shall come and say, Have we not cast out devils, and wrought miracles in thy name? And he will answer them, Away, I know you not.' Matth. vii. 22. Beloved, our Saviour loves not to slight any part of Christian perfection: yet my meaning is not to deny unto a Christian the power of doing miracles, for every Christian man doth every day greater miracles than yet I have spoken of. But, Beloved, in this matter of miracles, we do much abuse ourselves; for why seems it unto us a greater miracle, that our Saviour once turned a little water into wine, than every

year in so many vine-trees to turn that into wine in the branches, which being received at the root was mere water? Or why was it more wonderful for him once to feed five thousand with five loaves, than every year to feed the whole world, by the strange multiplication of a few seeds cast into the ground? After the same manner do we by the daily actions of Christian men. For why is it a greater miracle to raise the dead, than for every man to raise himself from the death of sin to the life of righteousness? Why seems it more miraculous to open the eyes of him that was born blind, than for every one of us to open the eyes of his understanding, which by reason of original corruption was born blind? For by the same finger, by the same power of God, by which the apostles wrought these miracles, doth every Christian man do this: and without this finger, it is as impossible for us to do this, as for the apostles to do the miracles they did, without the assistance of the extraordinary power of Christ. So that hitherto in nothing are we found inferior unto the chief apostles: what if there be some things we cannot do? shall this prejudice our power? It is a saying in Quintilian, 'It must not impeach the learning of a good Grammarian to be ignorant of some things*:' for there are many unnecessary quiblets and quirks in grammar, of which to purchase

* Mibi inter virtutes Grammatici habebitur, aliqua nescire.
Iust. Orat. lib. i. c. 9.

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the knowledge, were but loss of labour and time. Beloved, in the like manner may we speak of ourselves, it must not disparage the power of a Christian, that he cannot do some things. For in regard of the height and excellency of his profession, these inferior things which he cannot do, they are nought else but grammar quirks, and to be ambitious to do them, were but a nice, minute, and over-superstitious diligence. And yet a Christian, if he list, may challenge this power, that he 'can do all things;' yea, even such things as he cannot do. St. Austin answering a question made unto him, why the gift of tongues was ceased in the church, and no man spake with that variety of languages, which divers had in the primitive times, wittily tells us, 'That every one may justly claim 'unto himself that miraculous gift of tongues.' For since the church, which is the body of Christ, of which we are but members, is far and wide dispersed over the earth, and is in sundry nations, which use sundry languages, every one of us may well be said to speak with divers tongues; because in that which is done by the whole, or by any part of it, every part may claim his share*. Be-

* The passage is in Fulgentius. *Homil. de sancto die Pentecostes.* Proinde si quisquam dixerit alicui nostrum; accepisti Spiritum Sanctum, quare non linguis omnibus loqueris? respondere debet: loquor sane omnibus linguis, quia in eo sum Christi corpore, hoc est, in ecclesia, quae loquitur omnibus linguis.

loved, how much more, by this reason, may every one of us lay a far directer claim to an absolute power of doing all things, even in its largest extent, since I say not some inferior member, but Christ, who is our head, hath this power truly resident in him. Howsoever therefore in each member it seems to be but partial, yet in our head it is at full; and every one of us may assume to ourselves this power of doing all things, because we are subordinate members unto that head which can do all things. But I must leave this, and go on to the remainder of my text.

Hitherto I have spoken, first of the person, *I*. Secondly, of his power, *can do*. I should, by order of the words, proceed, in the third place, unto the subject or object of this power pointed out unto us in this word *πάντα*, *all things*. But the subject of this Christian power hath been so necessarily wrapped up, and tied together with the power, that for the opening of it, I have been constrained to exemplify at large, both what this *all things* is, and how far it doth extend: so that to enter upon it anew, were but to trouble you with repetition of what is already sufficiently opened. I will go on therefore unto the *second* general of my text. For here me-thinks that question might be asked, which Dalilah asked of Samson, 'Tell me, I pray thee, wherein this great strength lieth?' Judg. xvi. 6. Behold, Beloved, it is ex-

pressed in the last words, 'through Christ that
'strengtheneth.'

This is, as I told you, that hair wherein that admirable strength of a Christian doth reside. I confess, I have hitherto spoken of wonderful things, and hardly to be credited; wherefore, lest the strangeness of the argument call my credit into question*, lo here I present unto you the ground of all this: a small matter sometimes seems wonderful, till the cause of it be discovered, but as soon as we know the cause, we cease to marvel: how strange soever my discourse of Christian omnipotency may seem, yet look but upon this cause, and now nothing shall seem incredible. For to doubt of the omnipotency of a Christian, is to question the power of Christ himself. As the queen of Sheba told king Solomon, that she had heard great things of him in her own country, but now she saw truth did go beyond report: so, Beloved, he that travels in the first part of my text, and wonders at the strange report of a Christian man's power, let him come to the second part, to our Solomon, to him that is greater than Solomon, to Christ, and he shall find that the truth is greater than the fame of it; for if he that was possessed of the evil spirit in the gospel, was so strong, that being bound with chains and fetters, he brake them all: of what strength must he be then, whom

* Μη τὸ παράδοξον ὑπὸς Χριστοῦ ἀπίστον δοκῇ.

it pleaseth Christ to enable? or what chains or fetters shall be put upon him, which he will not break? From this doctrine therefore that Christ is he that doth thus enable us, we learn two lessons, which are, as it were, two props to keep us upright, that we lean not either to the right hand or to the left.

First, Not to be dejected or dismayed, by reason of this outward weakness and baseness in which we seem to be. Secondly, Not to be puffed up upon opinion and conceit of that strength and glory which is within us and unseen. For the first, for our own outward weakness, be it what it will, we cannot be more weak, more frail than Gideon's pitchers: now, as in them their frailty was their strength, and by being broken, they put to flight the army of the Midianites; so where it pleaseth Christ to work, that which seems weakness shall become strength, and turn to flight the strongest adversary. 'Publius Decius is army enough, and while we have him, our enemies can never be too numerous*,' said one in Livy; we may apply this unto ourselves: be we never so weak, yet Christ alone is army and forces enough, and with him we can never have too many enemies. The flesh indeed is weak, for so our Saviour tells us, Matth. xxvi. 41. yet this weakness of the flesh is no prejudice at all to the strength of a Christian;

* Satis sibi copiarum cum Publio Decio, et nunquam minimum hostium fore.

for though the flesh be weak, yet the spirit is strong, and so much our Saviour tells us too : and why then do we not follow the stronger part? 'If,' saith Tertullian, 'the spirit be stronger than 'the flesh, what madness is it in us to make choice 'of, and follow the weaker side *?' Which of you is so improvident, as, in a faction, to make choice of that side which he sees to be the weakest, and which he knows must fall †.

Again, this weakness of a Christian is only outward, within what he is, the words of my text do sufficiently shew. Socrates outwardly was a man of deformed shape, but he was one of an excellent spirit; and therefore Alcibiades in Plato compares him to an apothecary's box, which without had painted upon it an ape, or a satyre, or some deformed thing; but within was full of sweet and precious ointment. Thus, Beloved, it is with a Christian, whatsoever outward deformity he seems to have, howsoever he seems to be nothing but rags without, yet he is 'all glorious within:' Psal. xlv. 13. I have said 'ye are gods,' saith the scripture, Psal. lxxx. 6. the magistrate is wont to ingross and impropriate this scripture to himself; because sitting in place of authority, for execution of justice, he carries some resemblance

* Si spiritus carne fortior, quia generosior, nostra culpa infirmiora sectamur. Ad Uxorem. lib. i. 4.

† Nulla fides unquam miseros elegit amicos. Lucan. lib. viii. v. 555.

of God: but to whom can this scripture better belong than to the Christian man? For the magistrate indeed carries some shew of God without, but many times within is full of corruption and weakness; the Christian carries a shew of weakness without, but within is full of God and Christ.

The second thing which I told you we learned, was a lesson teaching us not to be puffed up with opinion and conceit of our own outward strength and glory: for if any man, because of this, shall begin to think of himself above what he ought, let him know that he may say of his exceeding strength, no otherwise than the man in the book of Kings spake, when his ax was fallen into the water, 'Alas, master, it was but lent!' 2 Kings vi. 5. Those that build houses make antics which seem to hold up the beams, whereas indeed, as St. Paul tells the olive-branch, 'Thou bearest not the root, but the root thee:' Rom. xi. 18. so is it true in them, they bear not up the house, the house bears up them. Beloved, seem we never so strong, yet we are but antics; the strength by which the house of Christ doth stand, it is not ours, it is Christ's, who by that power, 'by which he is able to subdue all things to himself,' Philip. iii. 21. doth sustain both himself and us.

THE D U T Y O F CONSTANT PRAYER.

Luke xviii. 1.

*And he spake a parable unto them, to this end,
that men ought always to pray, and not to
faint.*

MY text is like the temple of Jerusalem, it is the house of prayer, wherein we may learn many special points of the skill and practice of it. Now as that temple had two parts; First, the fore-front, the porch, the walk before it; and secondly, the temple itself: so have these words likewise two parts; First, there are words which stand before like a porch or walk, and they are these, 'And he spake a parable unto them:' Secondly, here are words like unto the temple itself, 'that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.'

If you please, before we enter into the temple, or speak of these words, 'That men ought always to pray,' let us stay and entertain ourselves a

little in the porch, and see what matter of meditation it will yield. 'And he spake a parable unto them.' To instruct and teach the ignorant, no method, no way, so speedy and effectual as by parables and fables; Strabo gives the reason of it, 'For man is a creature naturally desirous to know *;' but it is according to the proverb, as the cat desires fish, loath to touch the water, loath to take the pains to learn: knowledge is indeed a thing very pleasant, but to learn is a thing harsh and tedious above all the things in the world. The book which St. John eats in the tenth of the Apocalypse, was in his mouth sweet as honey, but bitter in his belly: Beloved, those students that, like St. John, eat up whole volumes, these find the contrary; for in the mouth, in the perusal, their books are harsh and unpleasant; but in the stomach, when they are understood and digested, then are they delightful and pleasurable. Yet one thing, by the providence of God, our nature hath, which makes this rough way to learn, more plain and easy; it is fond of tales; common experience shews we are all very desirous to hear narrations and reports, either pleasant or strange; wise men therefore, and God himself, which is wiser than men, being to train up mankind, a subject dull of hearing, and hardly drawn to learn, have from time to time wrought upon this humour, upon

* Φιλανθήμων γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος προσιμὸν δὲ τότε τὸ φιλόμυθον.
Geogr. lib. i. pag. 19. Edit. Casaub.

this part of our disposition, and mitigated, sugar-ed, as it were, the unpleasantness of a difficult and hard lesson, with the sweetness of some delightful parable or fable: and St. Chrysostom tells us of a physician, who finding his patient to abhor physic, but infinitely long for wine, heating an earthen cup in the fire, and quenching it in wine, put his potion therein, that so the sick person being deceived with the smell of wine, might unawares drink of the physic: or, that I may better draw my comparison from scripture, as when Jacob meant to be welcome to his father Isaac, he put on his brother Esau's apparel, and so got access: So, Beloved, wise men, when they meant either to instruct the ignorant, or to reprove offenders, to procure their welcome, and make their way more passable, have been wont for the most part, as it were, to clothe their lesson or reproof in a parable, or to serve it in a dish favouring of wine, that so Jacob might be admitted under Esau's coat, that the smell of the pleasantness of wine might draw down the wholesomeness of physic. Great and singular have been those effects, which this kind of teaching by parables hath wrought in men; by informing their ignorance, reproofing their error, working patience of reproof, opening the understanding, moving the affections, and other sovereign commodities. And for this cause not only our poets and profane authors, but whole cities, and men which gave laws to commonwealths, have

made especial choice of this course*: yea, our Saviour Christ himself hath filled the gospels with parables, made them like a divine and Christian Esop's Fables, because he found it to be exceeding profitable. For, first of all, it is the plainest and most familiar way, and, above all other, stoops to the capacity of the learner, as being drawn either from trees, or beasts, or from some ordinary, common, and known actions of men; as from a shepherd attending his flock, from an husbandman sowing corn in his field, from a fisher casting his net into the sea, from a woman putting leaven into her dough, or the like. So that in this respect a parable is like Moses's tabernacle, which outwardly was nothing but goats skins, or some ordinary stuff, but within it was silk, and purple, and gold. And indeed, since those we teach are either children, or ignorant persons who are but children, for every man in what he is ignorant, is no better than a child †, that manner of information fits best, which is most easy and familiar. Again, a parable is a kind of pattern and example, expressing unto us what we hear; now nothing doth more illustrate and explain than instance and example; in a parable, as it were upon a stage, the

* Τὸς μύθους ἀνεδέξαντο ὅχι οἱ ποιεῖται μόνον, ἀλλὰ ἔτι αἱ πόλεις πολὺ πρότερον, ἢ οἱ νομοθετοῦνται, τῷ χρησίμῳ χάριν. Strabo. Geogr. lib. i. p. 19.

† Ἰδιώτης γὰρ πᾶς καὶ ἀπαίδευτος τρόπον τινὰ παῖς ἐστίν. Strabo. Geogr. lib. i. p. 19.

thing that we are taught is in a manner acted, and set forth before our eyes.

Secondly, Parables do not only by their plainness open the understanding, but they work upon the affections, and breed delight of hearing, by reason of that faceteness and wittiness which is many times found in them, by reason of which they insinuate themselves, and creep into us, and, ere we are aware, work that end for which they were delivered. Who is not much moved with that parable of Jotham in the book of Judges, ix. 8. that 'the trees went forth to chuse a king;' or that of Menenius Agrippa in Livy, that the parts of the body conspired against the belly; by which the one shewed the wickedness of the men of Shechem against the sons of Gideon; the other, the folly of the common people, in conspiring against the senators and noblemen? And no marvel, Beloved, if this faceteness of parables doth thus work with men, since it seems to have had wonderful force with God himself: for when the Canaanitish woman, in the gospel, had long importuned our Saviour in the behalf of her daughter, and our Saviour had answered her with that short, cutting, and reproachful parable, 'It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto dogs;' Matth. xv. 26. she facetely and wittily retorts and turns upon our Saviour his own parable; 'Truth, Lord,' saith she, 'yet dogs do eat the crums that fall from their master's table:'

be it that I am but a dog, I require no more than is due to a dog, even the crumbs that fall from your table: with which speech our Saviour was so far taken, as that he seems to have been stricken into a wonderment; for he presently cries out, 'O wo-
' man, great is thy faith.'

Thirdly, There is one thing that this way of instruction by parable hath above all other kinds of teaching; it serves excellently for reproof; for man is a proud creature, impatient of plain and open check and reprehension; many times no way of dealing with him, when he hath offended, but by deceiving him with wiliness and craft; he that comes rudely and plainly to reprehend, doth many times more hurt than good *. I speak not this only in regard of ministerial reprehension, used by the preacher of the word, but of all other: for to reprove offenders is a common duty, and belongs to every private man as well as to the minister. St. Austin, in his book *de Civitate Dei*, handling the question, Why in common calamities the good do bear a part as well as the evil, amongst many other reasons, gives this as a special one, That good men are not careful enough in reproofing the errors of their offending brethren, but, by connivency and silence, in a manner partake in their sins, and, as it were by consent, make

* Πολλάκις ἀπατῆσαι διόν· ὁ γὰρ ἐξ εὐθείας προειπὶχθῆναι
καὶ μετὰ τὸν ὅτι ἀπατηθῆναι ἀργήσατο.

them their own *. It shall not be amiss therefore, even for you of the laity, to hear something concerning this art of reprehension, as a duty concerning you as well as the preacher. For the wisdom and gentleness of a Christian is never better seen than in reproving: now one common error of reproachers is their over-blunt and plain manner of rebuking; whilst they reprove the vice as if they hated the person, and upbraid rather than reprehend †; by this our importunity, we destroy more sinners than we save. It is an excellent observation in St. Chrysostom, 'He who is violently urged to shame, becomes insensible of shame ‡.' Unseasonable and importunate reproachers make offending persons to steel their forehead, and to set a good face upon their fact, as the phrase of the world is, and to seek out excuses and apologies for their sin. Tully tells us, that Antony the orator, being to defend a person who was accused of faction and sedition, bent his wits to maintain sedition was good, and not to be objected as a fault §. That we force not our offending brethren unto this degree of impudency, let us consult with our charity, and know the quality and nature of the offender. Husbandmen tell us, that

* De Civit. Dei, lib. i. c. 9.

† Dum sic objurgent, quasi oderint.

‡ Ψυχὴ γὰρ ἰππεύων ἀπερυθρίσασαι βίασθῃ, ὥς ἀταλγυσίαν ἐκίναται.

§ De Orat. lib. ii. §. 128.

the young and tender branches of a vine are not to be pruned away with a knife, but gently pulled away by hand. Beloved, before we reprove, let us know the condition of our brother, whether he be not like the young vine, soft and tender, and so to be cured rather with the hand than with the knife: and if he be grown so hard that he shall need the knife, we must not rashly adventure of it, but know there is a skill likewise in using the knife: as Ehud, in the book of Judges, when he went to kill Eglon, carries not his dagger in his hand, but comes unto him with a present, and had his dagger girt privily under his garment: or as a skilful physician of whom we read, being to heal an imposthume, and finding the sick person to be afraid of lancing, privily wrapped up his knife in a sponge, with which whilst he gently smoothed the place, he lanced it: so, Beloved, when we encounter our offending brother, we must not openly carry the dagger in our hand, for this were to defy our brother; but we must wrap our knife in our sponge, and lance him whilst we smooth him, and with all sweetness and gentleness of behaviour cure him; as Isaiah the prophet cured Hezekias, by laying a plaister of figs upon the fore. Men when they have offended are like unto fire, we must take heed how we come too near them; and therefore as the Cherubims in the book of Isaiah's prophecy takes a coal from the altar with the tongs: so when the prophets dealt with them,

they did not rudely handle them with their hands, but they came upon them warily under parables, as it were with the Cherubim tongs. How could Nathan have come so near unto king David, and drawn from him an acknowledgment of his sin, had he not come with the Cherubims tongs, and deceived him with a parable? Or how should the prophet have made king Ahab see his error in letting go king Benhadad, if he had not, as it were, put a trick upon the king, and disguised both himself and his speech, and masked his errand with the parable of him who let go the prisoner that was committed to his charge? So that in this respect, if we would define a parable, we must pronounce it to be a civil or spiritual stratagem, by which persons, who need instruction, are honestly and piously beguiled for their own profit. No marvel therefore, if our Saviour Christ in his preaching doth every where drive upon parables. For being to deliver to us so many lessons, so strange, so uncouth, so hard to learn, it was meet he should make choice of that method of teaching which hath most likelihood to prevail and commend them unto us. The doctrine which our Saviour in my text labours to beat into us, is the continuing and perpetuating of our prayer and religious meditation: a lesson hard to be attained, and therefore thrice he commends it unto us; once by example, twice by parable, both of them very effectual means to teach: by example of that im-

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portunate Canaanitish woman, in the xv. of St. Matthew: by a parable, first, in the xi. of St. Luke, of him that lying warm in his bed, and loath to rise, yet at his friends importunity gets up, and lends him bread; and secondly, by the parable of the unjust judge here in my text.

But all this while I must not forget that I am but in the porch and entrance into the temple, where to walk too long, were, if not to lose, yet to abuse my time. Let us now therefore enter into the temple itself, and consider the main words of my text: 'That men ought always to pray, and not to faint:' which words have a double meaning. First, there is a sense which the words themselves yield as they lie: Secondly, the sense and meaning in which the Holy Ghost intended and spake them. If we look upon the sense which the words themselves do give, it seems we are advised by them to be like Anna the prophetess in Luke ii. 11. 'who departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayer night and day.' In all places, at all times, in season, out of season, upon occasion, upon no occasion, perpetually without intermission to pray; for thus the words do run, 'that we ought always to pray, and not to faint.' But if we look upon the sense in which the Holy Ghost spake these words, and consider what was his intent when he wrote them, we shall find that the lesson which we are hence to learn, is, That we be like unto Jacob in the book

of Genesis, wrestle with God, and tell him to his face, that we will not let him go till he hath given us his blessing: Gen. xxxii. 26. That we become like bold-faced suitors, or impudent beggars, that will not be put by with a denial: but when we have poured out our supplications unto God, and find his ear locked up against us, yet to commence them again and again, and the third time; yea, without any fainting, or giving over, till, by a kind of importunate and unmannerly devotion, we have constrained God to let a blessing fall: and that this was the intent of the Holy Ghost in this place, it appears upon the very reading of the parable.

I will briefly speak unto you of both these senses in their order; and first of the sense which the words do give, That we always ought without intermission to pray.

Devotion in ordinary persons is a thing easily raised, and easily allayed: every strange event, every fear, every little calamity or distress is enough to put us into a strain of religious meditation; but on the contrary side, a small matter doth again as quickly kill it. It seems to be like a quotidian ague, it comes by fits, every day it takes us, and every day it leaves us: or like flax, or straw, or such light and dry stuff, which easily kindles, and as soon goes out. Indeed it is a good thing when we find our hearts thus tender, and upon every occasion ready to melt into devotion: for as to be

quick of sense is a sign of life, and the purest and best complexions are quickest of sense; so it is a great argument of spiritual life in us, and of purity of soul, when we are so easily apt to fall upon devout meditation. But our Saviour requires yet another quality in our devotion, it must be as lasting as it is quick. Quintilian advises his orator to beware how he stand too long upon a place of passion, because that passion is not lasting, 'and men cannot long weep *.' But, Beloved, our Saviour gives other precepts of Christian oratory; he wills, if we will prevail with God, to insist and dwell long upon a place of religious passion, and provide that our tears may be perpetual and never dry: an hard thing you will take it to be, yet certainly it is very possible. There is a question raised among the great masters of natural learning, Whether or no there may be a lamp so provided, that it may burn for ever? And they think it may be done. Beloved, our Saviour here teaches to practise that in spirituals, which hath been but a matter of speculation in naturals, even so to kindle and dress our lamps, as that they shall never go out; but be like unto the good housewife's candle in the Proverbs, that goes not out by night, or rather like the sun which shines for evermore. Daniel is said to have kindled this lamp, and to have made his prayer thrice a day, David seven times a

* Nihil facilius quam lacrymas inarescere. Inst. Orat. lib. vi. c. 1.

day, but this is not enough; for in that the one is noted to have prayed seven times a day, the other thrice, it is likely at other times they did not pray; but God is not contented with this intermittent prayer; for if we look upon my text, we shall see that there must be no instant free from prayer: we must not measure our prayers by number. Number is a discrete quantity, as we call it, the parts of it are not connext, are not tied together, there is a separation, a distance betwixt them. That that measures out our prayer must be line and length, some continued quantity, whose parts have no separation, no intermission: for so saith my text, 'men ought always to pray.' *Always*, the whole life of a man ought to be but one continual prayer.

But let us a little consider how possible this is, and see if there be any thing that doth necessarily enforce intermission of prayer. And *first*, that wonderful lamp of which I but now told you great scholars had spoken, is not yet made, because they are not agreed of what matter to make it. And indeed in the world, things either are not at all, or being, do at length cease to be, either because there is no fit matter whence they may be framed, or else the matter of which they are made, vanishes and dies. But, Beloved, prayer is a strange thing, it can never want matter: it will be made out of any matter, upon any occasion whatsoever; whatsoever you do, where-

soever you are, doth minister occasion of some kind of prayer; either of thanksgiving unto God for his goodness; or of praising and admiring his greatness; or of petitioning to him in case of want or distress; or bewailing some sin, or neglect committed. Is it the consideration of God's benefits that will move us to thankfulness? Then certainly our thankfulness ought to be perpetual; there is no person so mean, no soul so poor, and distressed, and miserable, but if he search narrowly, he shall find some blessing for which he owes thankfulness unto God; if nothing else, yet his very misery and distress is a singular blessing, if he use it to that end for which it was sent. Is it the consideration of distress and affliction, and some degree of the curse of God upon us, that will stir our devotion? Indeed this is it with most men that kindles the fire of prayer in our hearts: men for the most part are like unto the unslaked lime, which never heats till you throw water upon it; so they never grow warm in devotion, till somewhat contrary to their wishes and disposition begins to afflict them: then certainly our petitions to God ought never to cease; for never was there man in any moment of his life entirely happy, either in body, goods, or good name, every man hath some part of affliction. Blessing and cursing, though they seem to be enemies, and contrary one to another, yet are never severed, but go hand in

hand together. Some men have more of one, some of another, but there is no man but hath some part of both; wherefore as it seems not only prayer in general, but all kind, all sort of prayer ought to be continual. Prayer must not be, as it were, of one thread, we must blend and temper together all kind of prayer, our praise or thanks, our sorrow, and make our prayer like Joseph's party coloured coat, like a beautiful garment of fundry colours. So then, as fire goes not out so long as it hath matter to feed on, so what shall be able to interrupt our devotion, which hath so great and everlasting store of matter to continue it?

Secondly, many things in the world are necessarily intermitted, because they are tied to place or times; all places, all times are not convenient for them: but in case of prayer it is otherwise, it seeks no place, it attends no time; it is not necessary we should come to the church, or expect a Sabbath, or an holiday; for prayer indeed especially was the Sabbath ordained, yet prayer itself is Sabbathless, and admits no rest, no intermission at all: if our hands be clean, we must, as our apostle commands us, lift them up every where, at all times, and make every place a church, every day a Sabbath, every hour canonical. As you go to the market, as you stand in the streets, as you walk in the fields, in all these places you may pray

as well, and with as good acceptance, as in the church *; for you yourselves are temples of the Holy Ghost, if the grace of God be in you, more precious than any of those which are made with hands. The church of Rome hath made a part of her Breviary, or Common-prayer-book, which she calls 'The Itinerary of the Clergy,' and it is a set form of prayer, which clergymen ought to use when they set out on a journey, and are upon their way; why she calls it the Itinerary of the clergy, and impropriates it unto the clergy, I know not; she might, for ought I see, have called it the Itinerary of the Laity, since it is a duty belonging unto them as well as to the minister: yet thus much the example of that church teaches, that no place, no occasion excludes prayer. We read in our books, that one of the Ethnic emperors was much taken, when he saw a woman going in the streets with a vessel of water on her head, her child at her girdle, her spindle in her hand twisting her thread as she went; he thought it a wonderful portion of diligence thus to employ all places and times indifferently. Beloved, if it be thus with bodily labour, how much more should it be so with the labour of the soul, which is far more easy, and needs not the help of any bodily instrument to act it? And how welcome a spectacle will it be,

* Εξέστι ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ἀγορὰν ἐμβαλλόμενος, ὁ καὶ ἑαυτὸν βαλόμενος εὐχὰς ποιεῖν ἰκτινῶς. Chrysost. de Anna. serm. iv. §. 6.

think you, unto the great King of heaven and earth, when he shall see that no time, no occasion, is able to interrupt the labour of our devotion? Is it the time of feasting and jollity which seems to prescribe against prayer? Indeed prayer is a grave and sober action, and seems not to stand with sport and merriment; yet notwithstanding it is of so pliable a nature, that it will accommodate and fit itself even to feasts and sportings. We read in the book of Daniel, that when Belshazzar made his great and last feast to his princes and lords, that they were merry, and drank wine in bowls, and 'praised the gods of gold and silver, of brasse, and of iron, of wood, and of stone.' Dan. v. 4. Beloved, shall Ethnic feasts find room for their idolatrous worship, and praise of their golden, brazen, wooden gods, and shall not our Christian feasts yield some place for the praise of the true God of heaven and earth? Last of all, is it time of sleep that seems to give a vacation and surcease to prayer? Beloved, sleep is no part of our life, we are not accountable for things done or not done then; Tertullian tells us, 'that an unclean dream shall no more condemn us, than a dream of martyrdom shall crown us*'; and the casuists do teach, that loose dreams in the night shall never be laid to our charge, if they be not occasioned by lewd thoughts in the day; for they are not

* Non magis enim ob stupri visionem dampnabimur, quam ob martyrii coronabimur. De Anima. c. 45.

thoughts springing out, but cast into our hearts by the devil, upon his score shall they go, and we shall not reckon for them: so then, though sleep partake not of our devotion, yet this hinders not the continualness of it. Aristotle tells us, that men who sleep perceive not any part of time to have passed, because they tie the last moment of their watching with the first moment of their awaking, as having no sense of what past betwixt, and so account of it as one continued time. Beloved, if we do with our devotion as we do with our time, if we shut up the last instant of our watching with a prayer, and resume that prayer at the first instant of our waking, we have made it one continued prayer without interruption.

Thirdly, and last of all, the greatest reason why many businesses of the world cannot be acted perpetually, is, because they must give room to others. The actions of the world are many times like unto quarrellsome birds, two of them cannot peaceably dwell in one bush *. But prayer hath that property which Aristotle gives unto substance, it is at peace, and holds good terms with all our cares of the world. No business so great, or that so much takes up the time and mind of a man, as that it needs exclude prayer: it is of a soft and sociable nature, and it can incorporate and sink into our business like water into ashes, and never

* Unicum arbutum non alit duos erithacos.

Μία λόχη η τρέφει δύο εριθάκος.

increase the bulk of them; it can mix and interweave itself with all our cares, without any hinderance unto them; nay, it is a great strength and improvement unto them. 'For, saith St. Chrysostom, as they that build houses of clay, must every where place studs and pieces of timber and wood so to strengthen the building; so all our cares of this life, which are no better than buildings of dirt and clay, we must strengthen and compact together with frequent and often prayer, as with bonds and props of timber*.' Let no man therefore think, that it is too much to require at the hands of men, at one and the selfsame instant, both to attend their vocation and their prayer: for the mind of a man is a very agile and nimble substance, and it is a wonderful thing to see how many things it will at one moment apply itself unto without any confusion or let. Look but upon the musician while he is in his practice, he tunes his voice, fingers his instrument, reads his ditty, marks the note, observes the time, all these things, at one and the same instant, without

* Μιμώμεθα τὴν οἰκοδόμην. ὃ γὰρ ἐκείνοι πλίνθος μέλλοντες οἰκοδομεῖν, διὰ τὸ τῆς ὕλης σαθρὸν ξύλοις μακροῖς ἀποσφίγγουσι τὴν οἰκοδομήν, καὶ ὁδὴ διὰ πολλῶν τούτοις ποῦσι τῷ διαστήματι, ἀλλὰ δι' ὀλίγου. ἵνα τῇ πυκνότητι τῶν ξύλων τύτῃ ἀσφαλίστην τὴν συνθήκην τῶν πλίνθων ἐργάζωνται τούτοις ὃ σὺ ποιῇσιν, ὃ τὰς βιοτικάς πράξεις ἀπάσας καθάπερ ἱμαντώσει ξύλων, τῇ συνεχῇ τῶν εὐχῶν διαλαμβάνων πάντοθι σὺ περιφράζον τὴν ζωὴν. De Anna, serm. iv. §. 5.

any distraction or impediment: thus should men do in case of devotion, and in the common acts of our vocation, let prayer bear a part; for prayer added unto diligent labour is like a sweet voice to a well-tuned instrument, and makes a pleasing harmony in the ears of God. 'The good housewife,' saith St. Chrysostom, 'as she sits at her distaff, and reaches out her hand to the flax, may even then lift up, if not her eyes, yet her mind unto heaven, and consecrate and hallow her work with earnest prayer unto God *.' 'The husbandman,' saith St. Jerom, 'at the plough-tail may sing an hallelujah, the sweating harvest-man may refresh himself with a psalm, the gardener, whilst he prunes his vines and arbours, may record some one of David's sonnets †.' The reason of this pliable nature of prayer is, because it is a thing of another condition than the acts of the world are: it requires no outward labour of the body, no outward fashion and manner of doing, but is internally acted in the soul itself, and leaves the outward members of our bodies free to perform those offices which require their help. Our legal business in the world must be done in

* Εξεστὶ καὶ γυναῖκα ἡλακάτην κατέχουσαν καὶ ἰσχυροῦσαν ἀναβλέψαι εἰς τὸν ὕψαν τῇ διανοίᾳ καὶ καλίσαι μετὰ σεμνότητος τὸν Θεόν.
De Anna. serm. iv. §. 6.

† Arator stivam tenens, hallelujah secantat, sudans messor psalmis sese evocat, et curva attondens falce vites vinitor aliquid Davidicum canit. Epist. lib. ii. ad Marcellum.

certain forms of breves and writs, and I know not what variety of outward ceremony, or else it is not warrantable: but prayer, Beloved, is not like an obligation or indenture, it requires no outward solemnity of words and ceremony. Quaint, witty, and set forms of prayer proceed many times from ostentation more than devotion; for any thing I know, it requires not so much as the moving of the lips or tongue: nay, one thing I know more, that the most forcible prayer transcends and far exceeds all power of words. For St. Paul speaking unto us concerning the most effectual kind of prayer, calls it 'sighs and groans that cannot be 'expressed*.' Rom. viii. 26. Nothing does cry so loud in the ears of God as the sighing of a contrite and earnest heart. We read in the xiv. of Exodus, that God speaks unto Moses, 'Why criest thou 'unto me? command the children of Israel that 'they go forward;' yet there appears not in the text any prayer that Moses made, or word that he spake. It was the earnestness of Moses's heart that was so high-voiced, that did so sound in the ears of the Lord †. Wherefore true prayer hath no commerce with the outward members of the body; for it requires not the voice, but the mind;

* Στενάγματα ἀλάλητα.

† This is taken from St. Basil. Hom. in Ps. cxiv. §. 2.

"Ἡ ὃν αἰδώς ὅτι Μωϋσῆς μὴδὲν φθιγγόμενος, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἀλάλητοις ἑαυτοῦ στεναγμοῖς ἐντυγχάνει τῷ Κυρίῳ, ἡκούτε, παρὰ τῷ Κυρίῳ λόγοντος, τί βούλῃς πρὸς μέ.

not the stretching of the hands, but the intention of the soul; not any outward shape or carriage of body, but the inward behaviour of the understanding *. How then can it slacken your worldly business and occasions, to mix with them sighs and groans, which are the most effectual kinds of prayer?

And let this suffice concerning the first meaning of the words. I will briefly speak concerning the second meaning, which I told you was the sense intended by the Holy Ghost when he wrote, and it is an exhortation to a religious importunity in our prayers, not to let our suits fall because they are not presently granted, but never to leave soliciting till we have prevailed, and so take the blessings of God by violence: this force, this violence is a thing most welcome unto God; for if the importunity of Esau's false, feigned, and malicious tears drew a blessing from his father Isaac, who yet had no greater store of blessings, as it seems; how much more shall the true religious importunity of zealous prayer pull a blessing out of the hands of God, who is rich in blessings above the sands of the sea in multitude? It is the courtiers rule, That over-modest suitors seldom speed: Beloved, we must follow the same rule in the court of heaven; intempestive bashfulness gets

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὅτι φωνῆς χρῆται, ὡς διανοίας, ὁδὸς ἐντάσεως χαρῶν, ὡς συντεταμένης ψυχῆς, ὁδὸς σχήματος, ἀλλὰ φρονήματος. Chrys. Hom. xix. de Abraam. id. Hom. de Chananaca.

nothing there. Faint asking does invite a denial*. Will you know the true name of the behaviour which prevails with God? St. Luke calls it importunity. xi. 8. and St. Chrysostom, speaking of the behaviour of the Canaanitish woman in the xv. of St. Matthew, tells us, 'She was importunate 'with a becoming assurance†; 'impropriety, importunity, impudency, these be the names of that person and behaviour which you must put on, if you mean to prevail in your suits with God. And indeed, if we consider that habit and manner that God is wont to put on, when his children do become suitors unto him, how he puts on a rigid, rough, and untractable carriage, even towards his dearest children, even then when he means them most good, we shall plainly see, we must use such kind of behaviour, if we will prevail with him: for the more effectually to express this demeanour of God towards his children, and to assure us it is so, and to teach us importunity, our Saviour Christ, that great master of requests, may seem to have done himself some wrong; first, by drawing in a manner odious comparisons, and likening the behaviour of God in these cases to a slothful friend, that is loth to leave his warm bed to do his friend a pleasure; and here in my text to an unjust judge,

* Qui timide rogat, docet negare.

† Καὶ ἐνταύχῃ τοῖς ἀνασχυσίαις. Hom. liii.
The learned reader will perceive that this expression does not admit of a literal interpretation.

that fears neither God nor man: and secondly, by his own behaviour toward the Canaanitish woman. It is strange to observe, how though he were the meekest person that ever was upon earth, yet here he strives, as it were, to unnaturalize himself, and lay by his natural sweetness of disposition, almost to forget common humanity, and puts on a kind of fullen and surly person of purpose to deter her: you shall not find our Saviour in all the New Testament in such a mood, so bent to condemn and vilify a poor suitor. St. Austin, comparing together St. Matthew and St. Mark, who both of them record the same story, and gathering together the circumstances out of them both, tells us, that first she follows our Saviour in the street, and that our Saviour takes house, as it were, to shelter himself from her; but she comes after, and throws herself at his feet; and he, as offended with her importunity, again quits the house to be rid of her, and all this while deigns her not a word*. If any behaviour could have dashed a suit, and broken the heart of a poor suitor, this had been enough: but here is not all, we have a civil precept, that if we be not disposed to pleasure a suitor, yet to give him good words, and shape him a gentle answer; it is hard if we cannot afford a suitor a gentle word. We read of Titus the Emperor, that he would never suffer any man to go sad and discontented from him; yet

* De consensu Evangelist. lib. ii. c. 49.

our Saviour seems to have forgot this part of civility, being importuned to answer her, gives her an answer worse than silence, and speaks words like the piercing of a sword, as Solomon speaks, 'I may not take the childrens bread, and cast it unto dogs:' Matth. xv. 26. and yet after all this strange copy of countenance, he fully subscribes to her request. Beloved, God hath not only expressed thus much in parables, and practised these strange delays upon Canaanitish women, but he hath acted it indeed, and that upon his dearest saints. David, one of the worthiest of his saints, yet how passionately doth he cry out, 'How long, Lord, wilt thou forget me? how long shall I seek counsel in my soul, and be so vexed in my heart?' Ps. xiii. 1, 2. Not only the saints on earth, but even those in heaven do seem to partake in this demeanour of God: we read in the book of the Revelation, that when the souls of the martyrs under the altar cried out, 'How long, Lord, just and holy, dost thou not avenge our blood from off the earth?' they received this answer, 'Have patience yet a little while.' Rev. vi. 10, 11. It is storied of Diogenes, that he was wont to supplicate to the statues, and to hold out his hands and beg of them, that so he might learn to brook and devour denial and tediousness of suit. Beloved, let us but meditate upon these examples, which I have related, and we shall not need to practise any of the Cynic's art. For if the saints

and blessed martyrs have their suits so long depending in the courts of heaven, then good reason that we should learn to brook delays, and arm ourselves with patience and expectation, when we find the ears of God not so open to our requests. When Joseph's brethren came down to buy corn, he gave them but a coarse welcome, he spake roughly unto them, he laid them in prison; yet the text tells us, that his bowels melted upon them, and at length he opened himself, and gave them courteous entertainment. Beloved, when we come unto God, as it were to buy corn, to beg at his hands such blessings as we need, though he speak roughly, though he deal more roughly with us, yet let us know he hath still Joseph's bowels, that his heart melts towards us, and at length he will open himself, and entertain us lovingly: and be it peradventure that we gain not what we look for, yet our labour of prayer is not lost. The blessed souls under the altar, of which I spake but now, though their petition was not granted, yet 'had they long white garments given them.' Rev. vi. 11. Even so, Beloved, if the wisdom of God shall not think it fit to perform our requests, yet he will give us the long white garment, something which shall be in lieu of a suit; though nothing else, yet patience and contentment, which are the greatest blessings upon earth.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM

NOT OF

THIS WORLD.

John xviii. 36.

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.

AS in the kingdoms of the world there is an art of courtship, a skill and mystery teaching to manage them: so in the spiritual kingdom of God and of Christ, there is an holy policy, there is an art of spiritual courtship, which teaches every subject there how to demean and bear himself. But, as betwixt their kingdoms, so betwixt their arts and courtship, betwixt the courtier of the one, and the courtier of the other, there is, as Abraham tells the rich man in St. Luke, a mighty gulf, a great distance, a great difference, and not only one, but many. Sundry of them I shall have occasion to touch in the process of my discourse; mean while I will single out one, which I will use

as a prologue and way unto my text. In the kingdoms of earthly princes, every subject is not fit to make a courtier; yea, were all fit, this were an honour to be communicated only unto some. There is a necessity of disproportion and inequality between men and men; and were all persons equal the world could not consist. Of men of ordinary fashion and parts, some must to the plough, some to their merchandize, some to their books, some to one trade, some to another: only, as Aristotle calls them, men of more than common wit and ability, active, choice, picked out of a thousand*, such must they be that bear honours, attend on princes persons, and serve in their courts. The scripture tells us, that when king Solomon saw that Jeroboam was an active, able, and industrious young man, he took him and made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph. Again, when David invited old Barzillai to the court, the good old man excuses himself: 'I am,' saith he, 'four-score years of age, and can thy servant taste what I eat, or what I drink? can I hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women? Lo here my son Chimham, he shall go with my lord the king, and do with him as shall seem good in thine eyes.' 2 Sam. xix. 35. Jeroboam and Chimham, strong, and able, and active persons, such are they that dwell in kings

* Οἱ χαριέντες ὁ πρακτικοί. Ethic. Nicom. lib. i. c. 3.

houses: of the rest, some are too old, some too young, some too dull, some too rude, or by some means or other unfit for such an end. Thus fares it with the honours of the world, they seem to participate of envy, or melancholy, and are of a solitary disposition; they are brightest when they are alone, or but in few; make them common, and they lose their grace; like lamps they may give light unto few, or to some one room, but no farther. But the honours in the court of the great King of heaven are of another nature, they rejoice in being communicated, and their glory is in the multitude of those that do partake in them. They are like unto the sun that rises, not to this or that man, but to all the world: in the court of God, no difference between Jeroboam and Barzillai; none too old, none too young; no indisposition, no imperfection makes you incapable of honours there; be but of his kingdom, and you are necessarily of his court: every man who is a subject there, is a courtier, yea, more than a courtier, he is a peer, he is a king, and hath an army of angels at his service, to pitch their tents about him, to deliver him; a guard of ministering spirits sent out to attend him for his safety. It shall not therefore be unreasonable for the meanest person that hears me this day, to hear as it were a lecture of spiritual policy and courtship; for no auditory can be unfit for such a lesson. Aristotle was wont to divide his lectures and readings into

acroamatical and exoterical: some of them contained only choice matter, and they were read privately to a select auditory; others contained but ordinary stuff, and were promiscuously and in public exposed to the hearing of all that would: Beloved, we read no acroamatic lectures, the secrets of the court of heaven (as far as it hath pleased the King of heaven to reveal them) lie open alike to all. Every man is alike of his court, alike of his council; and the meanest among Christians must not take it to be a thing without his sphere, above his reach, but must make account of himself as a fit hearer of a lesson in spiritual and saving policy; since if he be a subject in the kingdom of Christ, he can be no less than a courtier.

Now the first and main lesson to be learned by a courtier, is, how to discover and know the disposition and nature of the lord whom he is to serve, and the quality of that commonwealth in which he bears a place*. That therefore our heavenly courtier may not mistake himself, but be able to fit himself to the place he bears, I have made choice of these few words, which but now I read; words spoken by the king of that commonwealth, of which I am to treat, unto such as mean to be his liege-men there: words which sufficiently open unto the Christian politician the state and

* Ad consilium de republica dandum caput est nosse rempublicam. Cicero. de Orat. lib. ii. c. 32.

quality of that court in which he is to serve: 'My kingdom is not of this world, for if it were, then I would my servants fight;' which words seem like the Parthian horsemen, whose manner was to ride one way, but to shoot another way, they seem to go apace towards Pilate, but they aim and shoot at another mark; or rather like unto the speaker of them, unto our Saviour himself, when he was in one of the villages of Samaria, Luke ix. 51. where the text notes, that though he were in Samaria, 'yet his face was set towards Jerusalem:' so, Beloved, though these words be spoken to a Samaritan, to an infidel, to Pilate, yet their face is toward Jerusalem; they are a lesson directed to the subjects of his spiritual kingdom, of that Jerusalem which is from above, and is the mother of us all

In them we may consider two general parts. *First*, a denuntiation and message unto us; and *secondly*, a sign to confirm the truth of it. For it is the manner and method, as it were, which God doth use, when he dispatches a message, to annex a sign unto it, by which it may be known: when he sent Moses to the Israelites in Egypt, and Moses required a sign, he gave him a sign in his hand, in his rod; when he sent Gideon against Midian, he gave him a sign in the fleece of wool which was upon the floor; when he sent the prophet to Jeroboam, to prophesy against the altar in

Bethel, he gave him a sign, that the altar should rend, and the ashes fall out; when he sent Isaiah with a message to king Ahaz, he gave him a sign, 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive.' So, Beloved, in these words, there is a message, there is a sign: The first words are the message, 'My kingdom is not of this world;' the next words, 'For if it were, then would my servants fight.' These are Moses's rod, and Gideon's fleece; they are the sign which confirm the message.

The first part is a general proposition or maxim: the second is an example and particular instance of it: for in the first, our Saviour distinguishes his kingdom from the kingdoms of the world, and from all the fashions of them; in the second, amongst many other, he chuses one instance, wherein particularly he notes, that his kingdom is unlike to earthly kingdoms; for the kingdoms of the world are purchased and maintained by violence and blood, but so is not his. The reason why our Saviour fastens upon this reason of dissimilitude and unlikeness, is, because in gaining and upholding temporal kingdoms, nothing so usual as the sword and war: no kingdom of the world but by the sword is either gotten, or held, or both. The sword in a secular commonwealth is like the rod in a school; remove that away, and men will take their liberty. It is the plea which the Tarquins used to king Porfenna in Livy; 'The taste of liberty is so sweet, that except kings maintain

‘ their authority with as great violence, as the
 ‘ people affect their liberty, all things will run
 ‘ to confusion; and kingdoms, which are the
 ‘ goodliest things in the world, will quickly go to
 ‘ wreck * : when God gave a temporal kingdom
 unto his own people, he sent Moses and Joshua be-
 fore them to purchase it with their sword; when
 they were possessed of this kingdom, he sends then
 Gideon, and Samson, and David, and many wor-
 thies more, to maintain it by the sword: but now
 being to open unto the world another kind of
 kingdom, of rule and government, than hitherto
 it had been acquainted with; he tells us, that he
 is a king of a kingdom, which is erected and main-
 tained, not by Joshua and David, but by St. Pe-
 ter and St. Paul; not by the sword, but by the
 Spirit; not by violence, but by love; not by
 striving, but by yielding; not by fighting, but by
 dying. Pilate had heard that he was a king: it
 was the accusation which was framed against him,
 that he bare himself as king of the Jews; but be-
 cause he saw no pomp, no train, no guard about
 him, he took it but as an idle report: to put him
 therefore out of doubt, our Saviour assures him,
 that he is a king, but of such a kingdom as he
 could not skill of: ‘ My kingdom is not of this

* Satis libertatem ipsam habere dulcedinis, nisi quantâ vi
 civitates eam expetant, tantâ regna reges defendant, æquare
 summa infimis, adesse finem regnis rei inter deos hominesque
 pulcherrimæ. Lib. ii. c. 9.

‘ world : if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews.’ For the better unfolding of which words ; First, we will consider what the meaning of this word *kingdom* is, for there lies an ambiguity in it. Secondly, we will consider what lessons for our instruction the next words will yield, ‘ Not of this world.’

First, Of this word *kingdom*. Our Saviour is a king three manner of ways, and so correlatively hath three distinct several kingdoms. He is first king in the largest extent and meaning which can possibly be imagined, and that is, as he is Creator and absolute Lord of all creatures. Of this kingdom, heaven, earth, and hell are three large provinces: angels, men, and devils, his very enemies, every creature, visible and invisible, are subjects of this kingdom. The glory and strength of this kingdom consists least of all in men, and man is the weakest part of it; for there is scarcely a creature in the world, by whom he hath not been conquered. When Alexander the Great had travelled through India, and over-ran many large provinces, and conquered many popular cities; when tidings came, that his soldiers in Greece had taken some small towns there, he scorned the news, and in contempt, Me-thinks (said he) I hear of the battle of Frogs and Mice. Beloved, if we look upon these huge armies of creatures, and consider of what wonderful strength they are, when the

Lord summons them to battle ; all the armies of men, and famous battles, of which we have so large histories, in the comparison of these, what are they, but Homer's tale, a Battle of Frogs and Mice ? Infinite legions of angels attend him in heaven, and every angel is an army : one angel, in the book of Kings, is sent out against the army of the Assyrians, and in one night fourscore thousand persons die for it. Base and contemptible creatures, when God calls for them, are of strength to conquer whole countries : he over-runs Egypt with his armies of frogs, and flies, and lice ; and before his own people with an army of hornets chases the Canaanites out of the land. Nay, the dull and senseless elements are up in arms when God summons them : he shoots his hail-shot ; with his hail-stones from heaven he destroys more of the Canaanites, than the Israelites can with their swords. As for his armies of fire and water, what power is able to withstand them ? Every creature, when God calls, is a soldier. How great then is the glory of this kingdom, of which the meanest parts are invincible !

Secondly, again our Saviour is a king in a more restrained and confined sense, as he is in heaven attended on by angels, and archangels, powers, principalities, and all the heavenly host. For though he be omnipresent, and fills every place both in heaven and earth, yet heaven is the palace and throne of this kingdom ; there is he better

seen and known, there with more state and honour served, and therefore more properly is his kingdom said to be there: and this is called his kingdom of glory: the rules, and laws, and admirable orders of which kingdom, could we come to see and discover, it would be with us as it was with the queen of Sheba, when she came to visit Solomon, of whom the scripture notes, that when she heard his wisdom, and had seen the order of his servants, the attendance that was given him, and the manner of his table, 'there was no more spirit left in her.' 1 Kings x. 5. Beloved, whilst this spirit is in us, we cannot possibly come to discern the laws and orders of this kingdom, and therefore I am constrained to be silent.

Thirdly, our Saviour is a King in a sense yet more impropriated. For as he took our nature upon him, as he came into the world to redeem mankind, and to conquer hell and death, so is there a kingdom annexed unto him; a kingdom, the purchase whereof cost him much sweat and blood, of which neither angels nor any other creature are a part, only that remnant of mankind, that number of blessed souls, which, like a brand out of the fire, by his death and passion he hath recovered out of the power of sin; and all these alone are the subjects of that kingdom. And this is that which is called his kingdom of grace, and which himself in scripture every where calls his

church, his spouse, his body, his flock; and this is that kingdom, which in this place is spoken of, and of which our Saviour tells Pilate, that it is not of this world; — 'My kingdom is not of this world.'

Which words, at the first reading, may seem to favour of a little imperfection; for they are nothing else but a negation or denial. Now our books teach us, that a negative makes nothing known; for we know things by discovering, not what they are not, but what they are: yet when we have well examined them, we shall find that there could not have been a speech delivered more effectual for the opening the nature of the church, and the discovery of men's errors in that respect. For I know no error so common, so frequent, so hardly to be rooted out, so much hindering the knowledge of the true nature of the church, as this, that men do take the church to be like unto the world. Tully tells us of a musician, that being asked what the soul was, answered, that it was harmony; 'He knew not (saith he) how to leave the principles of his own art*.' Again, Plato's scholars had been altogether bred up in arithmetic, and the knowledge of numbers, and hence it came, that when afterward they diverted their studies to the knowledge of nature, or moral philosophy, wheresoever they walked, they still feigned to themselves somewhat like unto num-

* Et is à principiis artis suae non recessit.

bers: the world they supposed was framed out of numbers; cities, and kingdoms, and commonwealths they thought stood by numbers; number with them was sole principle and creator of every thing. Beloved, when we come to learn the quality and state of Christ's kingdom, it fares much with us as it does with Tully's musician, or Plato's scholars; hardly can we forsake those principles in which we have been brought up. In the world we are born, in it we are bred, the world is the greatest part of our study, to the true knowledge of God and of Christ still we fancy unto us something of the world. It may seem but a light thing that I shall say, yet because it seems fitly to open my meaning, I will not refrain to speak it: Lucian, when Priam's young son was taken up into heaven, brings him in calling for milk and cheese, and such country cates as he was wont to eat on earth *. Beloved, when we first come to the table of God, to heavenly manna and angels food, it is much with us as it was with Priam's young son, when he came first into heaven, we cannot forget the milk and cheese, and the gross diet of the world. Our Saviour and his blessed apostles had great and often experience of this error in men: when our Saviour preached to Nicodemus the doctrine of regeneration, and new birth, how doth he still harp upon a gross conceit of a re-entry to be made into his mother's womb?

* The author seems to allude to Dial. Deor. iv.

When he preached unto the Samaritan woman concerning the water of life, how hardly is she driven from thinking of a material elementary water, such as was in Jacob's well? When Simon Magus, in the Acts, saw, that by laying on of hands the apostles gave the Holy Ghost, he offers them money to purchase himself the like power: he had been trafficking and merchandizing in the world, and saw what authority, what a kingdom money had amongst men; he therefore presently conceited, that God, and heaven, and all would be had for money. To teach therefore the young courtier in the court of heaven, that he commit no such solecisms, that hereafter he speak the true language and dialect of God, our Saviour sets down this as a principal rule in our spiritual grammar, that his court is not of this world. Nay, Beloved, not only the young courtier, but many of the old servants in the court of Christ, are stained with this error. It is storied of Leonides, which was schoolmaster to Alexander the Great, that he infected his non-age with some vices, which followed him then when he was at man's estate*: Beloved, the world hath been a long time a schoolmaster unto us, and hath stained our non-age with some of these spots which appear in us, even then when we are strong men in Christ. When our

* Quae robustum quoque et jam maximum regem ab illa institutione puerili sunt profecuta. Quint. Inst. Orat. lib. 1. c. 2.

Saviour, in the Acts, after his resurrection, was discoursing to his disciples concerning the kingdom of God, they presently brake forth into this question, 'Wilt thou now restore the kingdom unto Israel?' Acts i. 6. Certainly this question betrays their ignorance, their thoughts still ran upon a kingdom like unto the kingdoms of the world, notwithstanding they had so long, and so often heard our Saviour to the contrary: our Saviour therefore shortly takes them up; 'it is not yours,' your question is nothing to the purpose; the kingdom that I have spoken of is another manner of kingdom than you conceive. Sixteen hundred years and more hath the gospel been preached unto the world, and is this stain spunged out yet? I doubt it. Whence arise those novel and late disputes of the notes and visibility of the church? Is it not from hence they of Rome take the world, and the church to be like Mercury and Sosia in Plautus his comedies, so like one another, that one of them must wear a toy in his cap, that so the spectators may distinguish them? whence comes it that they stand so much upon state and ceremony in the church? Is it not from hence, that they think the church must come in like Agrippa and Berenice in the Acts, as St. Luke speaks, Acts xxv. 23. with a great deal of pomp, and train, and shew, and vanity; and that the service of God doth necessarily require this noise and tumult of outward state and ceremony? Whence comes it,

that we are at our wits ends, when we see persecution, and sword, and fire to rage against the true professors of the gospel? Is it not because, as these bring ruin and desolation upon the kingdoms of the world, so we suppose they work no other effect in the kingdom of Christ? All these conceits, and many more of the like nature, spring out of no other fountain, than that old inveterate error, which is so hardly wiped out of our hearts, That the state of the church and kingdom of Christ doth hold some proportion, some likeness with the state and managing of temporal kingdoms: wherefore to pluck out of our hearts a conceit so ancient, so deeply rootèd in us, our Saviour spake most excellently, most pertinently, and most fully, when he tells us, that his church, that 'his kingdom is 'not of this world.'

In which words of his there is contained the true art of discovering and knowing the true nature and essence of the church. For as they which make statues, cut and pare away all superfluities of the matter upon which they work; so our Saviour, to shew us the true proportion and feature of the church, prunes away the world and all superfluous excrescencies, and sends her to be seen, as he did our first parents in paradise, stark naked: as those elders in the apocryphal story of Susanna, when they would see her beauty, commanded to take off her mask; so he that longs to see the beauty of the church, must pull off that mask of

the world and outward shew. For as Judah in the book of Genesis, when Thamar sat veiled by the way-side, knew not his daughter from an whore : so whilst the church, the daughter and spouse of Christ, sits veiled with the world, and pomp, and shew, it will be an hard matter to discern her from an harlot. But yet further, to make the difference betwixt these kingdoms the more plainly to appear, and the better to fix it in your memories, I will briefly touch some of these heads in which they are most notoriously differenced.

The first head wherein the difference is seen, are the persons and subjects of this kingdom ; for as the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, so the subjects of this kingdom are men of another world, and not of this. Every one of us bears a double person, and accordingly is the subject of a double kingdom : the Holy Ghost, by the Psalmist, divides heaven and earth betwixt God and man, and tells us, as for God, ' he is in heaven, ' but the earth hath he given to the children of ' men : ' Ps. cxv. 16. so hath the same Spirit, by the apostle St. Paul, divided every one of our persons into heaven and earth, into an outward and earthly man, and into an inward and heavenly man : 1 Cor. xv. 44. this earth, that is this body of clay, hath he given to the sons of men, to the princes under whose government we live ; but heaven, that is the inward and spiritual man, hath he reserved unto himself ; they can restrain the out-

ward man, and moderate our outward actions, by edicts and laws they can tie our hands and our tongues; thus far they can go, and when they are gone thus far, they can go no farther*: but to rule the inward man in our hearts and souls, to set up an imperial throne in our understandings and wills, this part of our government belongs to God and to Christ: these are the subjects, this the government of his kingdom; men may be kings of earth and bodies, but Christ alone is the king of spirits and souls. Yet this inward government hath influence upon our outward actions; for the authority of kings over our outward man is not so absolute, but that it suffers a great restraint; it must stretch no farther than the prince of our inward man pleases: for if secular princes stretch out the skirts of their authority to command ought by which our souls are prejudiced, the king of souls hath in this case given us a greater command, 'That we rather obey God than men.' Acts v. 29.

The second head wherein the difference betwixt these kingdoms is seen, is in their laws; for as the kingdoms and the lawgivers, so are their laws very different: first, in their authors. The laws by which the commonwealth of Rome was antiently governed, were the works of many hands; some of them were the acts of the people; others

* ——— Illa se jactet in aula

Aeolus.

Virg. Aeneid.

were the decrees of the senate; others, the verdict of their judges; others, the opinions of wise men in cases of doubt; others, the rescripts and answers of their emperors, when they were consulted with*: but in the kingdom of Christ there are no acts of the people or decrees of the senate, no people, no senate, nor wise men, nor judges, had any hand in the laws by which it is governed; only the rescripts and writs of our king run here, these alone are the laws to which the subjects of this kingdom owe obedience. Again, the laws of both these kingdoms differ in regard of their quality and nature; for the laws of the kingdom of Christ are eternal, substantial, indispensable; but laws made by human authority are but light, superficial, and temporary; for all the human authority in the world can never enact one eternal and fundamental law. Let all the laws which men have made be laid together, and you shall see that they were made but upon occasion and circumstance either of time, or place, or persons in matters of themselves indifferent, and therefore either by discontinuance they either fell or ceased of themselves, or by reason of alteration of occasion and circumstance were necessarily revoked: those main fundamental laws upon which all the kingdoms of the world do stand, against theft, against murder, against adultery, dishonouring of parents, or the

* Plebiscita; senatus consulta; edicta praetorum; responsa prudentum; rescripta imperatorum.

like; they were never brought forth by man, neither were they the effects of any parliamentary sessions; they were written in our souls from the beginning, long before there was any authority regal extant among men: the intent of him who first enacted them was not to found a temporal, but to bring men to an eternal kingdom; and so far forth as they are used for the maintaining of outward state they are usurped, or at the best but borrowed: so that in this work of settling even the kingdoms of this world, if we compare the laws of God with the laws of men, we shall find, that God hath, as it were, founded the palaces and castles, and strength of them; but men have, like little children, built houses of clay and dirt, which every blast of wind overturns.

The third head by which they may be seen, is in the notes and marks by which they may be known: for the kingdoms of the world are confined, their place is known, their subjects are discernable, they have badges, and tokens, and arms by which they are discovered: but the church hath no such notes and marks, no herald hath as yet been found that could blazon the arms of that kingdom. Aeschylus the poet, describing the captains that came either for the siege or defence of the city of Thebes in Beotia, brings them in, in their order, every one with their shield, and upon his shield some device, and over that device a motto or word, according to the usual fancies of men in that

kind ; but when he comes to Amphiaraus, he notes of him, that he had no device in his shield, no impress or word ; and he gives the reason of it, ‘ Because he affected not shew, but to be that ‘ which others profess*.’ But to carry marks, and notes, and devices, may well beseem the world which is led by fancy and shew ; but the church is like Amphiaraus, she hath no device, no word in her shield, mark and essence with her are all one, and she hath no other note but to be : and, but that learned men must have something to busy their wits withal, these large discourses of the notes and marks by which we may know the church, might very well lie by, as containing nothing else but laborious vanities, and learned impertinences. For the church is not a thing that can be pointed out : the devil could shew our Saviour Christ all the kingdoms of the earth, and the glory of them, I hope the church was none of these ; it is the glory of it not to be seen, and the note of it to be invisible ; when we call any visible company of professors a church, it is but a word of courtesy : out of charity we hope men to be that which they do profess, and therefore we so speak as if they were that indeed whose name they bear ; where, and who they are that make up this kingdom is a question unfit for any man to move :

* ——— Σῆμα δ' ἐκ τῶν κύκλων.

Οὐ γὰρ δοκεῖν ἀριστος, ἀλλ' εἶναι δεῖν.

Aeschyl. Ἐτὰ τὴν Θέσιν. v. 597.

for the Lord only knoweth who are his. It is but Popish madness to send men up and down the world to find the church; it is like unto the children of the prophets, in the second of Kings ii. 17. that would needs seek Elijah, or like the nobles in Jerusalem, that would needs go seek Jeremiah the prophet, but could not find him, because the Lord had hid him. Jerem. xxxvi. 26. For in regard of the profession, the church (as our Saviour speaks) is like 'a city set upon a hill,' Matth. v. 14. you may quickly see and know what true Christianity is; but in regard of the persons the kingdom of heaven is, as our Saviour again tells us, 'like a treasure hidden in a field:' Matth. xiii. 44. except the place of their abode and their persons were discernible, who can tell, when we go thus to seek them, whether we do not like false hounds hunt counter (as the hunters phrase is) and so go from the game. When Saul went to seek his father's asses, he found a kingdom; let us take heed lest the contrary befall us, lest while we seek our Father's kingdom thus, we find but asses. Will you know where to find the kingdom of Christ? Our Saviour directs you in the gospel, 'The kingdom of heaven,' saith he, 'cometh not by observation, neither shall ye say, Lo here, or, lo there; but the kingdom of heaven is within you.' Luke xvii. 20, 21. Let every man therefore retire into himself, and see if he can find this kingdom in his heart; for if he find it not there,

in vain shall he find it in all the world besides.

The fourth head wherein the difference of these kingdoms is seen, is outward state and ceremony ; for outward pomp and shew is one of the greatest stays of the kingdom of this world: some thing there must be to amaze the people, and strike them into wonderment, or else majesty would quickly be contemned. The scripture recounting unto us king Solomon's royalty, tells us of his magnificent buildings, of his royal throne, of his servants, and his attendants, of his cup-bearers, of his meats, and these were the things which purchased unto him the reputation of majesty, above all the kings of the earth. Beloved, the kingdom of Christ is not like unto Solomon in his royalty, it is like unto David when he had put off all his royalty, and in a linen ephod, danced before the ark : and this plain and natural simplicity of it is like unto the lilies of the field, more glorious than Solomon in all his royalty. The idolatrous superstitions of Paganism stood in great need of such pompous solemnities ; ' for,' as Tertullian tells us, ' being nothing of themselves, they were to gain reputation of being something by concealment, and by outward state make shew of something answerable to the expectation they had raised*.' The case of the kingdoms of the world is the same ;

* Ut opinionem suspendio cognitionis aedificent, atque ita tantam majestatem exhibere videantur, quantam praestruerunt cupiditatem. Adv. Valentin. c. 1.

for all this state and magnificence used in the managing of them is nothing else but secular idolatry, used to gain veneration and reverence unto that, which, in comparison of the kingdom we speak of, is mere vanity. But the sceptre of the kingdom of Christ is a right sceptre, and to add unto it outward state, and riches, and pomp, is nothing else but to make a Centaur, marry and join the kingdom of Christ with the kingdom of the world, which Christ expressly here in my text hath divorced and put asunder. A thing which I do the rather note, because that the long continuance of some ceremonies in the church have occasioned many, especially of the church of Rome, to think that there is no religion, no service without these ceremonies. Our books tell us of a poor Spartan, that travelling in another country, and seeing the beams and posts of houses squared and carved, asked, 'If the trees grew so in those countries?' Beloved, many men that have been long acquainted with a form of worship, squared and carved, tricked and set out with shew and ceremony, fall upon this Spartan's conceit, think the trees grow so, and think that there is no natural shape and face of God's service but that. I confess the service of God hath evermore some ceremony attending it, and to our fathers, before Christ, may seem to have been necessary, because God commanded it: but let us not deceive ourselves, for neither is ceremony now, neither was

sacrifice then esteemed necessary, neither was the command of God concerning it, by those to whom it was given, ever taken to be peremptory: I will begin the warrant of what I have said out of St. Chrysostom; for in his comments upon the x. to the Hebrews, he denies that ever God from the beginning required, or that it was his will to ordain such an outward form of worship; and asking therefore of himself, ‘How then seems he to have commanded it?’ he answers, ‘by condescending only, and submitting himself unto human infirmity*’; now this condescending of God, wherein it consisted, Oecumenius opens; for because that men had a conceit, that it was convenient to offer up some part of their substance unto God, and so strongly were they possessed with this conceit, that if they offered it not up to him, they would offer it up to idols: God, saith he, rather than they should offer unto idols, required them to offer unto him. And thus was God understood by the holy men themselves, who lived under the shadow of those ceremonies: for David, when he had made his peace with God, after that great sin of his, opens this mystery; ‘For thou requirest not sacrifice,’ saith he, ‘else would I have given it thee; but thou delightest not in

* Καὶ τί θαυμάζεις, εἰ νῦν ὁ θελημα ἐστὶ τῷ θεῷ, ὅπου μὴ ἐξαρχῆς θελημα ἦν, τίς γὰρ ἐξέστησε ταῦτά, φησιν, ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν ὑμῶν; πῶς ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπίταξ; συγκαταβαίνων. Chrysost. ad Hebræos. Hom. 18. §. 1.

'burnt offerings: the sacrifice of God is a broken spirit: a troubled and a contrite heart, O God, dost thou not despise.' Pf. li. 16, 17. After the revolt of Jeroboam and the ten tribes from the house of David, there were many devout and religious persons in Israel, and yet we find not that they used the outward form of worship which was commanded. Elias and Elísha, two great prophets in Israel, did they ever go up to Jerusalem to worship? Obadiah, a great courtier in king Ahab's court, and one that feared the Lord exceedingly; the seven thousands which bowed not their knees to Baal, when came they up to the temple to offer? a thing which doubtless they would have done, if they had understood the commandment of God in that behalf, to have been absolute. Indeed, if we live in places where true religious persons do resort, and assemble for the service of God, it were a sin to neglect it. But otherwise it is sufficient, if we keep us from the pollutions of that place to which we are restrained. Why measure we God by ourselves, and because we are led with gay shews, and goodly things, think it is so with God *? Seneca reports, that a panto-mimus, a puppet-player and dancer in Rome, because he pleased the people well, was wont to go up every day into the Capitol, and practised his art, and dance before Jupiter, and thought he did the god

* Quid juvat hoc nostros templis admittere mores?

Pers. Sat. ii. v. 61.

NOT OF THIS WORLD. 311

a great pleasure *. Beloved, in many things we are like unto this puppet-player, and do much measure God by the people, by the world.

* Doctus Archimimus, senex jam decrepitus, quotidie in Capitolio mimum agebat, quasi dii libenter spectarent quem homines desierant. Seneca apud Augustin. de Civitate Dei. lib. vi. c. 10.

OF A

TENDER CONSCIENCE.

1 Sam. xxiv. 5.

And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt.

Temptation is the greatest occasioner of a Christian's honour: indeed, like an enemy, it threatens and endeavours his ruin; but in the conquest of it consists his crown and triumph. Were it possible for us to be at league and truce with this enemy, or to be without danger of gunshot, out of its reach, like the candle in the gospel, that is put under a bushel, the brightest part of our glory were quite obscured. As Maximus Tyrius spake of Hercules, 'If you take from him the savage beasts that he slew, and the tyrants whom he suppressed, his journies and labours, you lop and cut off the manifest arms and limbs of Hercules's renown*:' so, take from a Christian his temptations, his persecutions, his contentions,

* 'Εάν ἀρείης αὐτῷ τὰ θηρία ὃ τὸς δυνάσας ὃ τὰς αἰῶν ὃ κάτω ὁδὸς, ὃ τὰ δεινὰ ἐκείνα πάντα, ἡρωϊκίας τὴν ἀρετὴν τῷ Ἡρακλῆϊ.
Dissert. xxxv.

remove him from the devil, from the world, you deprive him of the chief matter and subject of his glory. Take Job from the dunghill; David from Saul; Daniel from the lions; the blessed martyrs from the rack, from the fire, from the sword; and what are they more than other men? As Samson tells Dalilah in the book of Judges, xvi. 17. 'If my hair be cut, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and like unto another man;' so, Beloved, these things are, as it were, the hair wherein their strength lay; shave that away, and they shall presently become weak, and like unto other men. But temptations are of two sorts, some are like professed and open enemies, which proclaim open war against us, like Goliath, they publicly come forth and challenge us; and such are the outward evils that befall us, loss of goods, sickness, disease, dishonour, infamy, persecutions, and the like: others there are of a more secret, close, and retired nature, like unto traitors, that bear the behaviour and countenance of friends; that espy out their advantage, and set privily upon us; the most troublesome kind of enemies, with whom we can have neither peace nor war, and against whom we can neither be provided nor secure*; these are our own corrupt thoughts and imaginations, which secretly lie in

* Per quos neutrum licet, nec tanquam in bello paratum esse, nec tanquam in pace securum. Seneca de Tranquil. Anim. c. 1.

our hearts, and watch their times to set on us, as the Philistines did in Dalilah's chamber to surprize Samson. For let a man but descend into himself, examine his own soul, take as it were an inventory of the passions, affections, thoughts of his own heart, look but what the number of them is, and let him make account of so many enemies *; a sort of enemies by so much the more dangerous, because that all those outward enemies, of which I but now spake, cannot come so near as to rase our skin, or endanger one hair of our head, if these give them not way: from these, as the asp borrows poison from the viper †, do those other temptations borrow all their power and strength to hurt us. For let us take a survey of all the outward afflictions, miseries and calamities, which have befallen all the saints of God in holy scripture, and let us suppose them to be all set and bent against some one alone, yet notwithstanding, as the three children in Daniel walked in the midst of the fire untouched, or as our Saviour Christ passed away through the midst of the people, that were ga-

* *Magnum de medico malum scorpionum terra suppurat. tot venena, quot ingenia; tot pernicies quot et species, tot dolores, quot colores; (as Tertullian rimes it.) Adv. Gnosticos. c. 1. It is impossible to give a literal translation of this passage; it implies that each kind of serpents in Africa had its own peculiar virulence.*

† *It would seem that the author here alludes to Tertullian. advers. Marcionem. lib. iii. c. 8.*

thered together to mischief him, and throw him down the hill; so shall he be able to pass from them all, without any hurt or harm, if some discontented, or distrustful, or despairing, or proud, or angry, or impure and lustful thought do not betray him unto them, and as it were open a door, and let them in. David, who is here the subject of my text, had very much ado with both sorts of enemies, and by his own experience found, that this latter rank of secret and privy enemies, in strength far surpassed the former. For whom neither the lion, nor the bear, nor Goliath, nor Saul, nor the Philistines could ever fasten upon, or drive to any inconvenience, one lustful thought forced to adultery and murder, one proud conceit stirred up to number the people, and drew from God great inconveniences and plagues both upon himself and his kingdom. How careful then ought we to be, and to stand on our guard, and keep a perpetual watch over our hearts, diligently to try and examine our thoughts? Nor while we live shall we be able perfectly to master, or securely to triumph over them: the only way to suppress and keep them down, is, to have a perpetual and careful jealousy of them *. Now of this religious care and watchfulness over our own thoughts, hath the Holy Ghost recorded for our use a notable example in these words, which but now I read, 'And

* *Nunquam securo triumphantur otio, sed tantum sollicitè premuntur imperio. August.*

‘it came to pass afterward, that David’s heart
 ‘smote him, because he had cut off Saul’s skirt.’

To relate unto you at large the occasion of these words, and the story from whence they depend, were but to wrong you; for I cannot think so meanly of your knowledge in scripture, as that any of you can be ignorant of so famous a passage. Yet thus much for the better opening of my way unto such doctrines as I shall draw from this text, I will call back unto your memories, that Saul hunting after David to kill him, unwittingly stepped into a cave where David was; David having now his enemy in his hand, and opportunity to revenge himself, lets slip all thought of revenging, and only cuts off privily the lap of his garment. For this deed, so harmless, so innocent, the scripture tells us that his heart smote him, that he suffered great anguish and remorse in conscience for it. That which I will require you to note, is the tenderness of conscience, and strange scrupulousness in David for so small an action; for it will yield us a great lesson. I say it appeareth not by scripture, that David intended any mischief or treason to Saul, or that he harboured in heart any disloyal thought against him. This purpose of cutting off the lap of Saul’s garment, was no other than to purchase to himself a harmless and honourable testimony of his innocency, and to prove unto Saul, that there was no likelihood that *he* sought his blood, whom he spared, having him at so great an advantage.

Yet notwithstanding, as if the rending of Saul's garment had been the wounding of Saul's body, or the shedding of his blood, David stands amazed, and is affrighted at so honourable, so innocent a thought. 'His heart smote him,' saith the scripture. As men that have been at sea, and endangered through the raging of winds, and tempests, and floods, when afterward the weather is cleared up, the winds allayed, the sea smoothed, and all calm, yet scarcely dare they set sail again, and trust to so uncertain, so fickle an element: so seems it to have fared with David in this place; he was a man subject to the same passions with other men, and doubtless, through the raging of unruly and disorderly affections, he had many times been in danger of spiritual shipwrack; wherefore, and though now he could discover no tempest in his heart, though the face of his thoughts were as smooth as glass; yet when he looks upon such fair and calm affections, his heart misgives him, and he dares not trust them. This plain contains mighty mountains, this tranquillity is a tempest*. The care he hath over his own heart fills him with suspicions, and still he thinks something, he knows not what, may be amiss. But I must come unto the words. 'And it came to pass afterward, that

* *Licet in morem stagni fusum aequor arideat; magnos hic campus montes habet; tranquillitas ista tempestas est.*
Hieron. Epist. lib. ii. ad Heliodorum.

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‘ David’s heart smote him, because he had cut off
‘ Saul’s skirt.’

In these words we will consider these three things.

1. The person, David, ‘ And David’s heart
‘ smote him.’

2. David’s sollicitousness, his care and jealousy, very significantly expressed in the next words, ‘ his
‘ heart smote him.’

3. The cause of this his care and anxiety of mind, in the last words, ‘ because he had cut off
‘ Saul’s skirt.’

In the *first* point, that is, in the person, we may consider his greatness, he was a king in expectation, and already anointed. A circumstance by so much the more considerable, because that greatness is commonly taken to be a privilege to sin: to be over careful and conscientious of our courses and actions are accounted virtues for private persons, kings have greater businesses than to examine every thought that comes into their hearts. It is the answer of Julia, Augustus the emperor’s daughter, when she was taxed for her too wanton and licentious living, and counselled to conform herself to the sobriety and gravity of her father; ‘ My father,’ saith she, ‘ forgets himself to be Caesar the emperor; but I remember myself to be ‘ Caesar’s daughter*. It was the speech of Ennius

* Pater meus obliviscitur se esse Caesarem; ego vero me-
mini me Caesaris filiam.

the poet, ' Private men in this have a privilege above princes ; private men may bemoan themselves, but thus to do becomes not princes * : ' and if at any time these sad and heavy-hearted thoughts do surprize them, they shall never want comforters to dispel them. When Ahab was for fullness fallen down upon his bed, because Naboth would not yield him his vineyard, Jezebel is presently at hand, and asks him, ' Art thou this ' day king of Israel ? ' 1 Kings xxi. 7. When Ammon pined away in the incestuous love of his sister Thamar, Jonadab his companion comes unto him, and asks him, ' Why is the king's son sad every ' day ? ' 2 Sam. xiii. 4. So that, as it seems, great persons can never be much or long sad. Yet David forgets his greatness, forgets his many occasions, gives no ear to his companions about him, but gives himself over to a scrupulous and serious consideration of an action in shew and countenance but light.

Secondly, As the person is great, so is the care and remorse conceived upon the consideration of his action exceeding great, which is our second part : and therefore the Holy Ghost expresses it in very significant terms : ' His heart smote him ; ' a phrase in scripture used by the Holy Ghost, when men begin to be sensible, and repent them of some sin. When David had committed that great sin

* Plebs in hoc regi ante-stat loco ;
Licet lachrimari plebi, regi honestè non licet.

of numbering the people, and began to be apprehensive of it, the scripture tells us, that 'David's heart smote him, when he had commanded Joab 'to number the people.' 1 Kings xxiv. 10. Wherefore by this smiting we may not here understand some light touch of conscience, like a grain of powder, presently kindled, and presently gone: for the most hard and flinty hearts many times yield such sparks as these. He that is most fleshed in sin, commits it not without some remorse; for sin evermore leaves some scruple, some sting, some loathsomeness in the hearts of those that are most enamoured of it. But as Simeon tells the blessed virgin in St. Luke's gospel, ii, 35. A sword shall pierce through thine heart; so it seems to have been with David. It was not some light touch to rase only the surface and skin of the heart, but like a sword it pierced deep into him: to teach us one lesson, that actions spotted, though but with the least suspicion of sin, ought not carelessly to be passed by, or slightly glanced at, but we ought to be deeply apprehensive of them, and bestow greatest care and consideration upon them.

The *third* part of our text containeth the cause of David's remorse, in the last words, 'because 'he cut off Saul's skirt.' In the two former parts we had to do with greatness: there was 1. a great person, and 2. great remorse; can we in this third part find out any great cause or reason of this, so to make all parts proportionable? Cer-

tainly he that shall attentively read and weigh these first words of my text, and know the story, might think that David had committed some notable error, as some great oppression, or some cruel slaughter, or some such royal sin, which none but kings and great men can commit. But, Beloved, this my text seems to be like the windows in Solomon's temple, broad within, but narrow without: or like a pyramid, large and spacious at the basis and ground of it, but small and sharp at the top. The person and remorse, which are the ground and subject of my text, both are great and large; but the cause, which is the very crown and top of all, that is very small, yea peradventure none at all. For whether it be that myself, accustomed to greater sins, and now grown old in them, have lost all sense of small and petty errors, or whether indeed there be no error at all in this action of David, but only some fancy, some jealousy arising out of that godly and careful watch he kept over all his ways; or whatsoever else it was that caused this scruple or remorse in David, it is a very hard matter to discover, and yet notwithstanding, that we may make more open pass unto such doctrines as I shall raise out of these words, let us a little scan and consider what it was in this action that made David thus strangely scrupulous.

And first of all, was it for that he had touched and taken that which was none of his own, and

therefore might seem to fall within the compass of the law against injury and purloining? This seems not probable: for when afterward, in the like case, he came upon Saul as he was sleeping in the camp, and took from him the spear and the pot of water which stood at his head, we do not read that his head, that his heart smote him, and yet he took what was none of his.

Or, 2ly, was it that he did wrong and dishonour Saul in mangling his garment? Indeed the Jews have a tradition, that this was the sin of which David was here so sensible. And therefore say they, whereas we read in the first of Kings, that when David grew old, they covered him with cloaths, but he gat no heat, this was the punishment of his sin committed against Saul: God so providing, that garments should not be serviceable to him, who had offended in wronging Saul's garments. But this I must let go as a fable.

Or, 3ly, was it that he had unadvisedly given way to some disloyal thought, and at first resolved to revenge himself on Saul, having him at the advantage, though afterward he repented? Indeed St. Chrysostom thinks so; and therefore on those words at the latter end of the verse next before my text, 'And David arose,' he notes, 'See you not, saith he, what a tempest of rage and anger begins to rise in him *;' for he supposeth him

* Εἰς πῶς ὑπέβη τῆς ὀργῆς ὁ Χειμὼν. Hom. de Davide et Saule. i. §. 4.

to arise in heat and fury, with a resolution for blood; but it pleased God, in the way, to make him relent, and change the purpose of revenge into the action of cutting off his skirt; and that this smiting of David's heart was nothing else but his repenting himself for giving over-hasty entertainment to such a rebellious thought. But, Beloved, 'who shall lay any thing to the charge of 'God's elect?' Rom. viii. 33. David's thoughts were only known to God and himself. Since therefore God gives not this as a reason of David's remorse, but another thing; far be it from me, that I should wrong David so far, as to burden him with that, with which none but God can charge him. I rather chuse to follow St. Basil's rule, 'Let the scriptures be understood as they lie*.' The scripture tells us, David's heart smote him, because he cut off the skirt of Saul's garment, and not because he had conceived against Saul any thought of blood. But what cause then shall we give of David's remorse? none other, Beloved, but that religious and careful jealousy which still he had over his own thoughts, which made him to suspect all things, be they never so safe †, and never to think himself secure from the contagion

* *Νομιζω ως γυμνασιαι* — A good rule, which the fathers, and particularly St. Basil himself, would have done well to have observed. See his commentary upon Ps. xxviii. in our translation Ps. xxix.

† *Pietatis affectu etiam quae tuta sunt formidare. Hier.*

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of sin. It was with David, as it was wont to be with men that are often troubled with sicknesses and diseases; they disquiet themselves with every little alteration in their bodies, repair to the physician when they are well, and think every heat to be an ague-fit: these men are not sick; but they do not know what it is to be in health*. In the same state is David, he had been often infected with spiritual weakness and disease, and therefore he suspects every motion of his heart, and takes every thought to be a temptation; his soul was not sick of any sin, but he did not know what it was to be in spiritual health.

For us, and for our use, hath the Holy Ghost registered this example of scruple and tenderness of conscience. Let us return to ourselves, and see what lessons we may learn hence for our behoof. Men usually are either grown old in sin, and therefore their eye-sight is decayed, they cannot easily see and discern smaller sins: or else as Hagar, in the book of Genesis xxi. 16. laid Ismael afar off from her, that she might not be grieved with the sight of him; so we labour to lay our sins far out of ken, that the memory and sight of them might

* Qui ex longa et gravi valetudine expliciti, motiunculis, levibusque interim offensis perstringuntur, et cum reliquias effugerint, suspicionibus tamen inquietantur, medicisque jam sani manum porrigunt, et omnem calorem corporis sui calumniantur; horum non parum sanum est corpus, sed sanitati parum assuevit. Seneca de tranquill. anim. c. 2.

not exasperate and trouble us. For the cure of both these infirmities, I have borrowed out of the Lord's treasury an optic glass, which, if we use it, will restore our decayed eye-sight, and quicken and make us read our sins in the smallest print; and let them lie never so far from us, yet will it present them unto us in their true quantity and greatness. Towards the better use of which spiritual glass, one lesson would I especially commend unto you; to be perpetually jealous and suspicious of your thoughts, and to be quick-scented, easily to trace the footing of sin, to be easily sensible of it, when we think ourselves to have done amiss: a lesson naturally arising, as I take it, out of David's example, commended unto us in this place. Now how absolutely behooveful it is for us to hold a perpetual watch over our hearts, and be jealous of such thoughts as spring out of them, it will appear by these reasons.

First, because that sin is of such a sly insinuating nature, that it will privily creep in, and closely cleave to our thoughts and intents, though we perceive it not. For as waters, though of themselves most pure, will relish and savour of the earth and soil through which they pass: so thoughts in themselves good, passing through the corrupt and evil ground of our hearts, cannot but receive some tincture, some dye, some relish from them. When David had an intent to build God an house, he doubtless conceived no otherwile of

this his intent, than of a religious and honourable purpose, and, in outward appearance, there was no cause why he should doubt of God's acceptance; yet we see this purpose of his disliked by God, and rejected, and the reason given, 'because thou art a man of blood.' 1 Chron. xxii. 8. How shall we then secure ourselves of any thought, if such an intent as this, so favouring of zeal, of sanctification, of love unto the glory of God, have such a flaw in it as makes it unprofitable? and how necessary is it, that we bring all our imaginations and intents to the fire and to the refining pot, so thoroughly to try them, and bring them to their highest point of purity and perfection? Be it, peradventure, that the action be in itself good; if it be liable to any suspicion of evil, it is enough to blast it. It is the Holy Ghost's rule, given by the blessed apostle, that we 'abstain from all shew and appearance of evil,' 1 Thes. v. 22. that we refrain as much as possible from all such actions as are capable of misconstruction. What is more lawful, than for the labourer to have his hire? than for those that labour in the gospel, to live by the gospel? Yet we see St. Paul refused this liberty, and chose rather to work with his own hands; only for this reason, because he would not give occasion to any, that would misinterpret his action, to live at others cost, and feed on the sweat of others brows. What befalls princes many times, and great persons that have abused their authority, the

people rise and suppress them, deface their statues, forbid their coin, put away all things that bear any memory of them: so seems our blessed apostle to deal here: look what actions they be which bear any inscription, any image and title, any shew or spot of sin, these hath he thought good even to banish and quite prohibit. Our prophane stories tell us, that when Julius Caesar had divorced his wife, being asked why he did so, since nothing was brought against her to prove her dishonest, his answer was, 'That she that will be wife of Caesar must not only be free from dishonesty, but from all suspicion of it*:' Beloved, St. Paul tells the Corinthians, that he had 'espoused them unto one husband, that he might deliver them as a chaste virgin unto Christ;' 2 Cor. xi. 2. and God every where in scripture compares his church unto an espoused wife, and himself unto an husband, a husband far more jealous than ever Caesar was: How careful then must that soul be, that intends to marry itself to such a jealous husband, to abstain not only from all pollution of sin, but from all suspicion of it? Last of all, it is Tertulian's speech, 'How much more will he dread to commit what is evil, who stands in awe of doing what is lawful †.' It is wisdom sometimes to

* Meos tam suspicione quam crimine judico carere oportere. Suet. Jul. Caes. c. 74.

† Quanto facilius illicita timebit, qui etiam licita verebitur. De cultu foeminarum. c. 10.

suspect and shun things that are lawful; for there are many actions in themselves good, which yet to many men become occasions of sin and scandal: for it is with our actions as it is with our meats and drinks; as divers meats fit not to divers constitutions of body, so all actions accord not well with all tempers of mind: as therefore what dish it is we easily surfeit of, though it be otherwise good, it is wisdom totally to abstain from; so look what actions they be in which we find ourselves prone to sin, it is good spiritual physic to use abstinence, and quite to leave them. For if our Saviour commands us to pluck out our eyes, and pare off our hands, if once they become unto us cause of sin, how much more then must we prune away all inward thoughts, all outward circumstances, which become occasion of offence unto us?

A second reason, why I would persuade you to entertain a jealousy of all your thoughts and actions, is a natural over-charitable affection, which I see to be in most men unto their own ways; and which is strange, the worse they are, the more are we naturally inclined to favour them: the reason is, because the worse they are, the more they are our own. When question was sometime made, Why good herbs grow so sparingly, and with great labour and pains, whereas weeds grow apace without any culture and tilling? it was answered, That the earth was a natural mother to

the one, to the other she was a step-mother; the one she brought forth of herself, to the other she was constrained. Beloved, it is with our hearts as it is with the earth, the natural fruit of them is weeds and evil thoughts, unto them our hearts are as mothers, they spring up in us of themselves, without any care or manuring: but as for good thoughts, if they be found in our hearts, they are not natural, they are set there by a high hand, they are there by a kind of spiritual inoculation and grafting, as men graft apples and kind fruits upon thorns and crabs: no marvel then, if like choice herbs and fruits, they grow so tenderly, and need so much care and cherishing. As therefore parents, though their own children be very deformed, yet love them more than others, though more beautiful: so corrupt and evil thoughts are naturally dearer unto us than good, because we are as mothers unto them, to the rest we are but step-dames.

Two notable fruits there are of this over-charitableness to our own actions. First, a willingness that we have to flatter, to deceive, and abuse our own selves by pretences and excuses. There is a plain, a downright, and as it were a country reprobate, one that sees his sin, and cares not much to excuse it, and is content to go on, and as it were in simplicity to cast himself away: there is a more witty, more refined, and, as it were, a more gentleman-like reprobate, one that strives to smooth

and gild over his sin, to deceive others and himself with excuses and apologies; 'to take great pains,' as St. Basil speaks, 'and with the expence of 'a great deal of wit and art to damn himself *.' When Saul, being sent against Amalek, had spared Agag and the best and fattest of the prey, at Samuel's coming to visit him, how doth he wipe his mouth, as if all had been well, and trimly composes himself to entertain him, 'Blessed art thou 'of the Lord, I have performed the command- 'ment of the Lord?' 1 Sam. xv. 13. And when Samuel had shewed him his error, how quickly hath he his excuse at his fingers ends, 'We have 'spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to 'sacrifice unto the Lord?' ver. 16. 'He thinks,' as Tertullian speaks, 'to gull almighty God with 'fair and flattering pretences, and becomes a bawd 'to his own vice †;' it is the common error of us all, and in most of our actions we do as Saul did, endeavour to put tricks upon ourselves: Beloved, were we not partial, but rigid censurers of our own thoughts, this corrupt fruit would quickly rot and fall away.

Again, there is a second fruit springing out of this favour and dotage in our own actions, an error as common, though not so dangerous, for we are content many times to acknowledge that some-

* Μετὰ πλόνος τέχνης, ἔ παρασκευῆς, ἔ πραγματείας ἀπο-
λόγηται.

† Et Deo adulatur, et sibi lenocinatur.

thing is amiss in our actions, we will confess them to be sins, but we account of them as little sins, sins of a lesser size, not so fearful, easily pardonable. There is a sinner, who by committing some great and heinous crime, as Tertullian calls it, 'such a sin as with open mouth devours salvation *,' doth, as it were, with one step leap into hell, and of this kind of sinners the number is fewer: but abundance there are, who avoiding great and heinous sins, by committing lesser sins, as they think, can be content to go by degrees, and as it were step by step into hell. Beloved, let us a little put on the optic glass I but now spake of, that we may see whether any sin be so small as we take it: I know there is difference of sins; our Saviour tells us, that there is a beam, and there is a mote: but withal this I know, that the best way to keep us from sin, is to loath even the least, as if it were the greatest †; if we look through this glass, it will make us think every mote a beam. Sins in themselves are unequal, but in regard of us, and of our endeavour to avoid them, they are all equal. 'Fly from evil,' saith the Psalmist, Ps. xxxvii. 27. [old translation] he tells us not, that there is one greater evil from which we must fly, and another less, from which it is enough if we do but go: but he bids us fly, and to

* Crimen devoratorium salutis. De Idolatr. c. 2.

† Minima pro maximis cavere. Hieron. Epist. lib. 4. ad Celantiam.

make haste alike from all. To think that a sin is less than it is, may be dangerous, for it makes us the less careful to avoid it: but to mistake on the other hand, and think a sin greater than it is, this is a very profitable error. Would to God we did always thus err; for besides that there is no danger in it, it makes us more fearful to commit sin. Our Saviour reprehends the Pharisees in the gospel, because they could 'strain at gnats, but swallow camels;' Matth. xxiii. 24. but yet it is true, that men learn at length to swallow camels, by swallowing gnats at first: no sinner so hardy as to set upon the greatest sins at first*. The way by which men train up themselves to the committing gross and heinous sins, is by not being at first conscientious of lesser sins; 'and indeed,' saith Paulinus in St. Jerom, 'who dares call any sin little, that is committed against God †?' Small contempts against great princes are accounted great oversights; for what is wanting in the thing, is made up in the worth of the person. How great a sin then is the smallest contempt that is done against God? It is the best wisdom for us, not so much to consider what is commanded, as who it is that commanded it; to consider, I

* Nemo repente fuit turpissimus. Juvenal.

† Et sane nescio, an possimus leve aliquod peccatum dicere quod in Dei contemptum admittitur. Lib. ii. Epist. ad Celantiam. *This epistle is supposed to be by Paulinus, although inserted in the works of Jerom.*

say, not the smallness of the law, but the greatness of the lawgiver*. Sins comparatively may be counted greater or lesser, but absolutely none can be counted small. To conclude then this point, 'Charity suspecteth no harm,' saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 6. true, but we must note, that some virtues in us concern ourselves, as faith, hope, temperance, and the like: some virtues concern not ourselves, but others; but such an one is charity. Charity that wills Christians to think well of all others, can have little room upon ourselves: let us then make use of this charity towards our neighbours; hope the best of all their actions; but let us take heed how we be over-charitably minded to ourselves. Caesar professed, that he would rather die, than suspect his friends; and he sped accordingly, for he died by the treachery of those friends whom he suspected not. Let us take heed how we be over-kind unto our own thoughts, how we think it an error to be too suspicious of them: 'and thou too my son†;' peradventure those sons of our own hearts, whom we least suspect, will in the end prove those who shall betray us.

But I come to a third reason. A third reason

* Prudentissimus i.e est, qui non tam considerat quid justum sit, quam illum, qui jusserit; nec quantitatem imperii, sed imperantis cogitat dignitatem. Ibid.

† Καὶ σὺ τὸν υἱόν. — The words of Caesar to Decimus Brutus.

why I shall advise you to this jealousy over your own thoughts, is the difficulty of discovering them betime, and discerning of what spirit they are. For our heart is like that field in the gospel, in which the husbandman sows good corn, and the enemy sows tares. Matth. xiii. 25. God infuseth good thoughts, and the devil ill. Now as weeds many times at their first budding are hardly known from good herbs; so, at the first springing and budding of our thoughts, a hard matter it is to know the weed from the good herb, the corn from the tare. As Judah, in the book of Genesis, knew not Tamar, till the fruit of his sin committed with her began to shew itself: so, till the fruits of our thoughts and purposes begin to appear, except we search very narrowly, we can scarcely discover of what rank they are. 'Then the iron that lay in the bottom, will swim at the top of the water, and among the pleasant palm-trees will be found the bitterness of myrrh*.' We read in the second of Samuel, vi. 7. that when the ark was brought from Kirjath-jearim, the oxen that drew the cart shook it, and Uzzah reaching out his hand

* It is probable that this passage will seem obscure to many readers. The author alludes to the complaint which Jerom makes of the avarice of some monks in his age. '*Vidimus nuper et planximus Croesi opes unius morte deprehenfas, urbisque stipes, quasi in usus pauperum congregatas, stirpi et posteris derelictas. Tunc ferrum quod latebat in profundo supernatavit aquae, et inter palmarum arbores myrrhat*

to save it from falling, for his good service was laid dead in the place. Doubtless Uzzah his accompanying the ark was a sign of his love unto it; his love unto it begat in him a fear to see it in danger; his fear to see it in danger bred in him a desire to keep it from danger. See, Beloved, what a number of golden thoughts are here; yet, as we read in the book of Job, when 'the servants of God came and stood before him, Satan also came and stood amongst them;' Job i. 6. So in this chorus and quire of these angelical thoughts, the devil finds a place to rest himself in: for this desire of Uzzah to save the ark from danger, made him forget what was written, that none should touch the ark, save only the priests; Numb. iii. 38. the breach of which precept brought that fearful judgment upon him. You see, Beloved, that though the course of our thoughts be like Jacob's ladder, and God himself be at one end of them, yet Satan, if he can, will be at the other. Let us learn, by this example of Uzzah, betimes to discover our thoughts, and not to suffer them to grow till their fruit betray them. Indeed our Saviour hath given us a rule, 'You shall know them by their fruits;' Matth. vii. 16. but we must

'amaritudo monstrata est.' He compares selfishness and rapacity, among those of the monastic profession, to the bitter waters of Marah, near the palm-trees of Elim, Exod. xv. 23. 27. and the discovery of such secret enormities to 'the iron that did swim.' 2 Kings vi. 6.

take heed that we extend not this rule too far: Uzzah felt the fruit of his thoughts to his own cost. It is never good trying conclusions there, where the chastisement instantly follows the offence. Let us learn to decipher our thoughts then, when we may do it without danger, whilst they are in the seed, whilst they are yet but budding and peeping above ground, whilst yet there is only need of the weed-hook, and not of the hatchet *.

A *fourth* reason yet there is, for which I would counsel you to hold a strict hand over your thoughts, and it is, because that from outward sins we can better preserve ourselves, than from our sins in thought. Beloved, there is a transient sin, and there is an immanent sin; there is a sin that is outwardly acted by the service of the body, there is a sin that requires not the help of the body, but is committed inwardly in the very thought and soul, a speculative or an intellectual sin. Outward sins are many ways passed by, means may be wanting, company may hinder, time and place may be inconvenient; but for speculative sins, or sins in thought, all times, all occasions, all places, are alike. 'A man,' saith St. Basil, 'of great gravity and countenance sits in the midst of the market-place, with many hundreds about him, and looking upon him, yet notwithstanding this man, even this man, in the midst of all the compa-

* Donec sarculo tantum opus est, non securi.

'ny, fancies to himself what he desires, and in
'his imaginations goes unto the place of sin, or
'rather retires into his own heart, and there he
'finds place and means to commit a sin that hath
'no witness but God*. If we retire to our pri-
vate chambers, these sins will follow us thither, and
as Baanah and Rechab did by Ish-bosheth Saul's
son, they will find us out upon our beds, and slay
us there. If we go to the church, they will find us
out there, and as Adrammelech and Sharezer slew
Sennacherib, whilst he was worshipping his god;
they will set upon us even in the midst of our ho-
liest meditations and prayers: neither chamber
no church, no place so private, none so holy, that
can give us sanctuary, or shelter us from them.
St. Jerom confesses thus much of himself, that
when he had forsaken the world, all outward oc-
casions of sin, and gone into the desert, and shut
himself up in a poor cell, and macerated his body
with watchings, with fastings, and perpetual prayers
and religious exercise †, yet could he not be se-

* Καὶ πῦ τις τῶν σοφῶν ἔκαστος καὶ φρονησάντων ἐπὶ σιμνότητι, πλάσμα
σωφροσύνης ἔχων περιεχόμενος, ἐν μέσσοις καθιζόμενος πολλάκις τοῖς
ἐκ' αἰσῆς αὐτὸν μακαρίζουσιν, ἀπιδράμε τῇ διανοίᾳ πρὸς τὸν τῆς ἀμαρ-
τίας τόπον ἐν τῷ ἀφανῶ τῆς καρδίας κινήματι. ὁδὸς τῇ φαντασίᾳ τὰ
στυδαζόμενα, ἀντυπῶσαι τινὰ ὁμιλίαν ἐκ εὐπρεπῆ, καὶ ὅλος ἐν τῷ
κρυφαίῳ τῆς καρδίας ἰργαστήρ, ἰναργῇ ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὴν ἡδονὴν ζωγρα-
φήσας, ἀμάρτυρον ἴσω τὴν ἀμαρτίαν ὀργάσαστο, ἄγνωστον πάντι,
ὥς ἂν ἔλθῃ ὁ ἀποκαλύπτων τὰ κρυπτά τῷ σκέτους, ἔφανερῶν τὰς
βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν. Homil. ad illud, *Attende tibi ipsi.*

† In the former editions, some corrupted Greek words,

cure from them; 'his body was now grown pale, 'and meagre, and cold, but yet his heart burnt with 'unlawful desires*.' Again, they are sins of quick and easy dispatch; they are done, as St. Basil notes, in a moment of time, without labour of body, without care of mind †: one wanton look makes us guilty of adultery, one angry conceit guilty of murder, one covetous conceit guilty of robbery. Whatsoever is outwardly committed, either with difficulty of circumstance, or labour of body, or danger of law, *that* is inwardly committed in the soul without any trouble at all. Fifthly, consider but the strength of your thoughts, and you will see there is great reason to keep them low; for there was no man yet that ever was foiled but by them, and not by the outward acting of sin. For the outward action is but the bark of the sin; but the very body and substance of sin is the wicked thought. 'Beware of men,' saith our Saviour, Matth. x. 17. when he gave his apostles counsel how to provide for their safety in times of outward danger: but if you will provide against

particularly *καμνίας*, are here quoted: it is probable that the author meant to allude to Gr. Nazianzen. de vita sua. vol. 2. Rig. edit. Morel.

Εὐχαίς, στανυμοίς, ἰαχέσσι, χαμννίας. This last word, which signifies 'lying on the ground,' the translator of Nazianzen renders thus, *chameunia*.

* *Pallebant ora jejuniis, et mens desideriis aestuabat in frigido corpore.* Ad Eustoch. de custod. virginittis.

† *Ἀχρόνος, ἀκόπως, ἀπραγματιύτως.*

inward dangers, we shall not need to beware of men, or of any outward force whatsoever. Let every man beware of himself, for in this case, every man is his own greatest enemy.

To draw then to a conclusion : That sins of thoughts prevail not against us, our way is, by a jealous care, first, to prevent them ; and to this hath the greatest part of my discourse hitherto tended. Secondly, if we have suffered them to gain a little ground upon us, let us betimes take the reins into our own hands, and pull them back again, and cast out our adversary whilst he is yet weak. ‘ Such,’ saith St. Chrysostom, ‘ are the souls of holy men ; their recovery is so quick, that they may seem to have risen before they fell *.’ It is a great sign of spiritual life in us, to be quickly sensible of the first track and footing of sin. For as bodies of the best and purest complexion have their senses quickest, so that soul which soonest perceives the first scent of sin, is of the divinest temper. Our books tell us, that Dionysius the Tyrant was grown so gross and fat, that though men thrust bodkins into him, he could not feel it †. Beloved, there is a sinner like unto this Dionysius ; David tells us of him, when he describes unto us a sinner ‘ whose heart is fat as brawn.’ Ps. cxix. 70. [old translation.] That we fall not therefore into that like stupidity and senselessness,

* *Τοιαῦται γὰρ τῶν ἁγίων αἱ ψυχαὶ, πρὶν ἔμπετον ἀνίστασθαι.*

† Aelian. var. Hist. lib. ix. c. 13.

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our way is to catch those young foxes, and strangle them in the nest. 'Suffer not your thoughts,' saith St. Jerom, 'to increase and gather strength 'upon you*.' For as the man that touches only at hot iron, and stays not on it, burns not his hand; so the first glances of evil thoughts harm us not; the harm is, if by consent, though never so little, you stay upon them. To be free from all onset of evil thoughts is a matter impossible, whilst we have these hearts of flesh. That man is praise-worthy, who as soon as any unclean thought, any child of Babylon is born in his heart, straightway strangles it in the birth, and dashes it against the rock, which rock is Christ †.

* Nolo finas cogitationes crescere. Ad Eustoch. de Custod. Virginitatis.

† Ille laudatur, ille praedicatur beatus, qui ut coeperit cogitare fordida, statim interficit cogitatus, et allidit ad petram, petra autem est Christus. Hieron. ibid.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

